THE BIBLE OF BOXING

The Ring

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SURPRISE MATCHUP CAUSES A STIR

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"I ENTERED BOXING BECAUSE I WANT TO HELP MY FAMILY, MY MOTHER. AND NOW I END MY BOXING CAREER IN HELPING THE FILIPINO PEOPLE."

PACQUIAO VS. BRADLEY III

PACMAN'S LAST STAND

THE FINALE OF AN EPIC CAREER

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Photographer Naoki Fukuda takes you inside the famous Teiken Gym in Tokyo.

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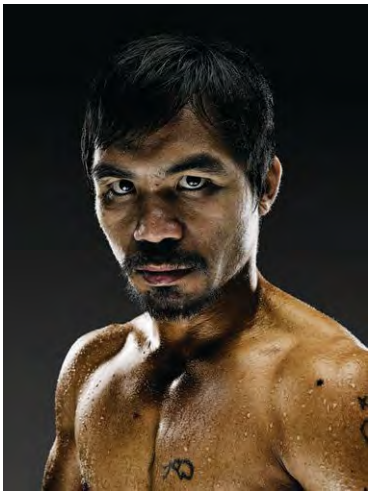

NAOKI FUKUDA

COVER PHOTOGRAPH OF MANNY PACQUIAO BY HOWARD SCHATZ, FROM HIS 25 YEAR RETROSPECTIVE. SCHATZIMAGES25YEARS-GLITTERATI.COM.

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Tyson Fury is pleased to be RING champion but knows he has more work to do.

The RING

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PRECIOUS MEMORIES

Floyd Mayweather Jr. will be remembered as the best fighter of his generation. Manny Pacquiao will be remembered as the most beloved.

No one with any objectivity will question the ability of Mayweather, who shoulder-rolled his way to a perfect record and many world titles as a professional fighter. However, while most of his victories were thorough, few were entertaining.

The last time Mayweather provided real drama might've been 2007, when he stopped then-unbeaten Ricky Hatton in 10 rounds. That was one of the most impressive performances in his career.

Here's the thing, though: Pacquiao turned that trick – knocking Hatton out cold – in two rounds in perhaps the most electrifying moment of the past few decades.

Pacquiao at that time was in the midst of an unforgettable run, one in which he beat in succession Marco Antonio Barrera, Juan Manuel Marquez, David Diaz, Oscar De La Hoya, Ricky Hatton and Miguel Cotto from 2007 to 2010 – four of the victories coming by knockout.

The boxing world went berserk, spontaneously creating a sort of Manny-mania. People went so far as to compare him to the great Henry Armstrong, which was a stretch but indicative of the impact on the sport Pacquiao had at the time.

Mayweather, who was "retired" for much of that period, never generated Pacquiao-like excitement. Never.

Of course, as all phenomenal boxers do if they fight long enough, Pacquiao came down to earth as he continued to move up in weight. He would score no more knockouts after Cotto and would lose three times, including a shocking one-punch stoppage at the hands of Marquez in 2012.

That didn't really matter, at least in terms of how Pacquiao will be remembered.

I'll think about his surprise knockout of rising star Lehlo Ledwaba in 2001, which kicked off the whole Pacquiao thing in spectacular fashion.

I'll think of that run, particularly the shot that put Hatton to sleep. The only comparable stoppages in my experiences were George Foreman and Evander Holyfield's knockouts of Michael Moorer and Mike Tyson, respectively. That's heady company.

I'll think of his overall series against the great Mexican trio of Barrera, Erik Morales and Marquez, which stretched from 2003 to 2012. Pacquiao went 6-2-1 against those future Hall of Famers, perhaps an underappreciated feat.

And, finally, I'll remember Pacquiao the man. He is a perpetually positive, always-smiling person with charming innocence who genuinely cares about other people. It has been impossible not to root for him.

Mayweather made a fortune in part because many fans rooted *against* him, something in which he almost seemed to revel. Pacquiao hasn't made quite the money "Money" amassed but he might be richer.

Pacquiao gave boxing fans so many precious memories. They'll always admire him for that. I know I do.

OPENING SHOT

Deontay Wilder's powerful right hand turned a so-so performance against Artur Szpilka into a dramatic one.

COME OUT WRITING

ALVAREZ VS. KHAN
AWESOME!

I was shocked when I heard the surprise announcement that my boy Canelo Alvarez would be fighting Amir Khan on May 7. It came out of nowhere. I thought to myself, "All right! This year's big Cinco de Mayo fight is going to be awesome!" The past few years, when Floyd Mayweather Jr. claimed the date, have been major letdowns. It's impossible to get excited when all you see is dancing and holding all night. Finally a fight I can look forward to, a fight pitting two of today's biggest names against each other, guys who will actually fight. I want a spectacle, I want to be entertained. The European fans will turn out to support Khan. They are crazy as hell! Hopefully they come out in full force, as they did for Ricky Hatton. My Mexicanos and I will be out doing our thing. Khan's fans vs. Canelo's fans. Big props to Khan for taking the fight. Everyone bashed him for supposedly being scared to fight Kell Brook. Proved everyone wrong. Khan will be game for a few rounds until Canelo catches him and puts him to sleep. And props to Golden Boy Promotions for making the fight. Oscar De La Hoya and Al Haymon working together. Crazy. Oscar knows what's up. Keep making great, entertaining fights.

Otilio Veliz
Covina, Calif.

ALL ABOUT MONEY

Like everyone, I was surprised and excited to hear of the news Canelo Alvarez and Amir Khan will match up on May 7. Then reality kicked in. This matchup will generate serious money. But then so would Floyd Mayweather vs. Sergey Kovalev. This is a money-making exercise, pure and simple, which made me wonder: Is that what boxing has become? Didn't it used to be that great fights make money not great money makes fights? I think it's a sad time in boxing that we've reached a stage where a fight is graded purely on what kind of pay-per-view numbers it makes. This fight, though it may capture the imagination, is going to damage the sport when 1 million-plus "buys" tune in to see a two-minute massacre. Did the money grabbers think about the future of the sport and its reputation once this farce has concluded?

Mark Prince
London

A BETTER MATCHUP

Canelo Alvarez vs. Gennady Golovkin – this is the big fight boxing needs to get fans excited and talking. They are both great fighters in their prime and will come to win. It needs to happen in 2016 at middleweight, no catchweight.

David Campbell
Davenport, Iowa

HOPELESS CAUSE?

I thinks it's pretty obvious that the PBC hasn't lifted boxing to the mainstream. It's a hopeless cause trying to make boxing as popular as it once was. The PBC is focusing too much on quantity rather than quality. Boxing is a star-driven sport. The PBC should focus solely on showcasing young potential superstars like Keith Thurman, Danny Garcia, Errol Spence, Deontay Wilder and Leo Santa Cruz and working to make them household names and potential pay-per-view cash cows. Pretty much all the other PBC fights that don't involve the fighters listed above are garbage, hurt the sport and don't belong on TV. Viewers only want to watch the sport's very best.

Tony Moga
St. Paul, Minn.

The Canelo Alvarez-Amir Khan matchup has fans talking.

UPSET TIME

I think Timothy Bradley will upset Manny Pacquiao on April 9. I know this isn't exactly the final fight fans were demanding to see from the Pacman but, as a boxing fan myself, I'm trying to stay positive about it. I think it could turn into a very entertaining fight. This is how I see it: Ever since Bradley had that tough 2014, with the loss to Pacquiao and the draw against Diego Chaves, people were wondering how much Bradley's stock was still worth. He's done nothing but improve since, especially with new trainer Teddy Atlas. As for Pacquiao, I think after his tough KO loss to Marquez and how much he struggled to stay competitive with Floyd Mayweather Jr., victory is ripe for the taking for Bradley. Either way, whoever wins, I think we are in for a more entertaining fight than the casual fan realizes.

Davis Clouse
Omaha, Neb.

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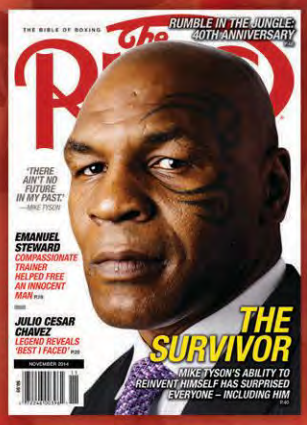

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ADVANCED DEGREES

Degrees of separation between fighters of the past and their more contemporary counterparts. This month: Bantamweight Sixto Escobar was Puerto Rico's first world champion; Hector Camacho, a 2016 International Boxing Hall of Fame Inductee, is one of its greatest. Advanced Degrees contributor Gregg Morgan linked the two in six steps even though Escobar last fought in 1940, Camacho in 2010. Have a look:

THE RING MAGAZINE

SIXTO ESCOBAR fought

LOU TRANSPARENTI who fought

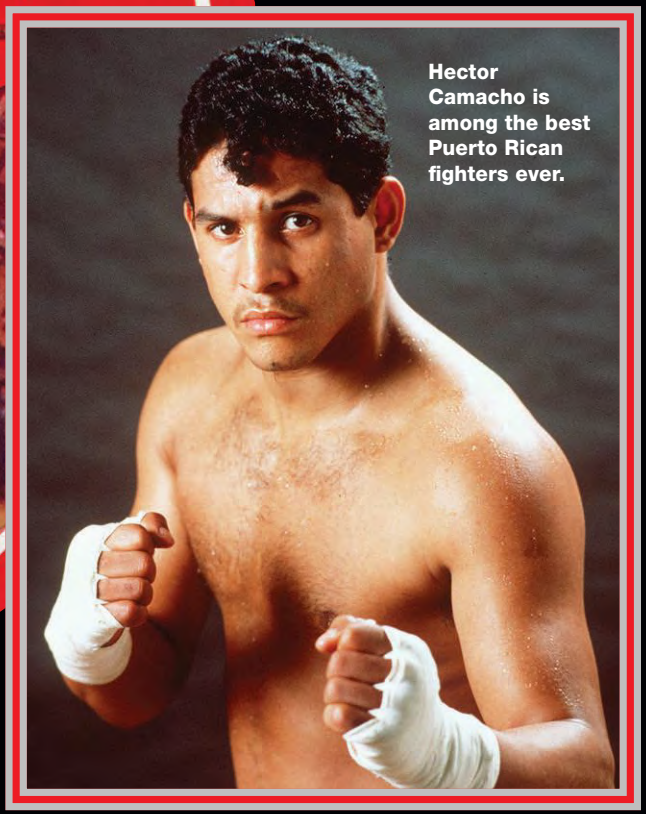
WILLIE PEP who fought

BOBBY BELL who fought

ANGEL ROBINSON GARCIA who fought

ROBERTO DURAN who fought

HECTOR CAMACHO



Hector Camacho is among the best Puerto Rican fighters ever.

10 A MONTHLY BOXING LIST

This month: We listed the tallest heavyweight champions in history last month. Here are the shortest (ties in chronological order).

« 1. **5-7 TOMMY BURNS**
2. **5-10 MIKE TYSON**
3. **5-10½ JOHN L. SULLIVAN**
4. **5-10½ ROCKY MARCIANO**
5. **5-11 ROY JONES JR.**
6. **5-11½ BOB FITZSIMMONS**
7. **5-11½ MARVIN HART**
8. **5-11½ JOE FRAZIER**
9. **6-0 FIVE TIED**

The five 6-foot-tall champs: Gene Tunney, Jack Sharkey, Ezzard Charles, Joe Walcott and Floyd Patterson. Source: boxrec.com

FIGHTERS' FAVORITES

WHAT BOXERS ARE INTO OUTSIDE THE SPORT

1 **MARCUS BROWNE** LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT PROSPECT ★
2 **DOMINIC WADE** MIDDLEWEIGHT CONTENDER ★ 3 **JOSEPH DIAZ** FEATHERWEIGHT PROSPECT

FIGHTER	MUSIC	CAR	FOOD	TATTOOS	ATHLETE OUTSIDE BOXING	MOVIE	VIDEO GAME
1.	"I like rap, hip-hop, R&B, gospel."	"An '01 Maxima now but I'm looking into a **Camaro**."	"My mom's food from Mona's Cuisine in Staten Island."	"No, not at all, no tattoos."	"Cristiano Ronaldo and LeBron James."	"'Paid in Full,' 'In Too Deep,' 'Goodfellas' and 'The Godfather.'"	"'**NBA 2K14**.'"
2.	"I like **Young Jeezy.**"	"I drive a Tahoe. My dream car is a Bentley; that's something I always liked."	"Pizza."	"I've got a lot. I've got my son on me, my team, my birth sign, scriptures, my hometown. I have maybe 24 or 25."	"LeBron James."	"'Belly.'"	"'Call of Duty.'"
3.	"Chris Brown, Future, Rick Ross – just songs that have a good beat because I'm always running and it gives me motivation and an adrenaline rush."	"I drive a 2008 Pontiac G6. My dream car would be a Mercedes or Audi."	"I love dessert. I love ice cream, I love cake, Twinkies, brownies – all that stuff."	"I have boxing gloves hanging down on my stomach. On the gloves, it says 'Diaz.'"	"**LeBron James**. I watch a lot of basketball."	"'Tropic Thunder.' It's very funny, it has good actors and every time I watch it I have a great laugh."	"I love playing sports video games – baseball, basketball, boxing – but most of all I like playing 'Call of Duty.'"

— Anson Wainwright

GOOD, BAD, WORSE

By **Michael Rosenthal**

THE BEST AND WORST IN BOXING FROM THE PAST MONTH

GOOD

I, for one, am already sick and tired of comeback chatter regarding Floyd Mayweather Jr. If he comes back, fine. If he doesn't, better yet. I know I'm not alone when I say that I've already begun to move on from "Money." That's why I was pleased to read what Mayweather had to say in an interview with Sky Sports in the U.K. "You must realize I'm a lot older now," he said. "Next year I will be 40 years old. This month (February) I will be 39. So you know the clock is ticking. In 12 months I'll be 40 years old. I didn't want the sport to retire me. I wanted to retire from the sport on my own terms and that's what it's really about. I've made crazy money in the sport, somewhere upwards of 800 million in the sport of boxing. I don't have the urge to go to any boxing gyms anymore. I look forward to training fighters." I've rarely endorsed anything that spills out of Mayweather's mouth but I'm with him in this case. All that made perfect sense, although we'll see whether he makes a good trainer. I know reporters are going to continue to beat the comeback drum with Mayweather whenever they run into him. And I'm sure there will continue to be times when Mayweather will hint at a return to boxing, perhaps just to amuse himself. I'm just going to stop paying attention to any of it until something concrete emerges. I'll be around if and when he ever comes back.

BAD

I often rail against the WBA, which isn't content to have one titleholder in each of the 17 weight divisions. The sanctioning body has a creative variety of "champions": super, world (or regular), interim and, in one case, a champion in recess. In total, the WBA currently has … brace yourself … *42* champions. The reason for this absurdity is obvious: The more titles the WBA has, the more money it makes in sanctioning fees. Pure greed. I'm sure the WBA people are laughing their way to the bank, thinking of the saps who dole out good money for the privilege of wearing their belt, "Idiots!" The result is more far reaching, though: The more belts there are, the less meaning they have. Of course, that applies to an overall proliferation of alphabet belts. We'd have 68 "champions" even if each of the four major organization had only one titleholder per division. I like to think that THE RING belts have more meaning than the alphabet belts for a number of reasons, including this fact: We have only four champions as I write this. That means the best must truly fight the best to earn our belt. And our Old School 8 feature, in which we name our champions in the original eight divisions (see Page 30), provides a more precise look at who the best fighters really are. Rumor has it that the WBA officials are thinking about reducing the number of champions. Let's hope they follow through. The status quo is ridiculous.

WORSE

THE RING Editorial Board's decision to strip Guillermo Rigondeaux of his junior featherweight championship and make him the No. 1 contender in mid-February was made with great deliberation. The editors feel that Rigo remains the best 122-pounder but, in the end, his inability to lure an elite opponent into the ring for almost three years forced our hand. We left it up to the fighters. No. 2 Scott Quigg and No. 3 Carl Frampton, who were scheduled to fight on Feb. 27, have said publicly that they'd fight Rigondeaux. Let's hope the winner of that fight follows through by meeting the Cuban for THE RING title. I fear he won't, at least not any time soon. First, a close Quigg-Frampton fight might lead to a rematch. That would leave Rigondeaux out of the picture for a while. And, second, if someone dominated, that fighter will have become a major star in the U.K. He isn't likely to risk that status against the gifted Rigondeaux, an opponent who would be extremely difficult to beat. Maybe, just maybe, that would come next year. Indeed, poor Rigo might have to continue to wait. And who knows how long it will be before THE RING crowns a new junior featherweight champ?

RING POLL A MONTHLY POLL OF OUR RINGTV.COM READERS

Will one of the greatest fighters of his era go out a winner? We asked: **What will be the result of the Manny Pacquiao-Tim Bradley fight on April 9?** Pacquiao has insisted that this is his last fight. Here is how you responded.

THE PERCENTAGES:

54.33	PACQUIAO BY DECISION
20.33	BRADLEY BY DECISION
17.60	PACQUIAO BY KNOCKOUT
5.45	BRADLEY BY KNOCKOUT
2.29	DRAW

NOTE: 1,835 READERS VOTED

BUSTER DOUGLAS

Buster Douglas (left) lost his heavyweight title to a man he respects, Evander Holyfield.

James "Buster" Douglas became an instant celebrity on Feb. 11, 1990, the day the 42-to-1 underdog knocked out the presumably unbeatable Mike Tyson to become the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world.

Douglas was never as formidable before or since but, because of one inspired performance in Tokyo, he will never be forgotten.

The former champ had a solid boxing pedigree. He was the son of former middleweight and light heavyweight contender Billy Douglas and had a good amateur career before turning pro in May 1981.

The big, strong and athletic Ohioan was a competent but inconsistent fighter pre-Tyson, losing some and winning some. He did enough of the latter to earn a shot at the IBF title stripped from Michael Spinks and acquitted himself well before being stopped in 10 rounds by Tony Tucker in 1987.

That might've been a good time to begin a slow fade but Douglas persisted, outpointing Trevor Berbick and Oliver McCall in 1989 to position himself as Tyson's mandatory challenger.

When the fight was announced, even family members questioned whether Douglas would actually step into the ring to face the most feared fighter of his generation, who was 37-0 – with 33 knockouts – entering the fight. His mother, for one, wanted to know what her son was thinking.

"She quickly realized I was gonna do it because she knew me and was satisfied after we spoke," Douglas told THE RING.

Sadly, Douglas' mother died during the relatively mild build-up to what was expected to be just

another Tyson wipeout. The loss of his mom inspired an already determined Douglas.

"That really intensified it but I was already on point. I was ready to go then, ready to fight," he said.

He headed to Japan immediately after the funeral, arriving 17 days before the fight.

"It was great in Tokyo but you got the sense nobody was taking it serious," said Douglas, underscoring the obvious.

Douglas said he knew what the outcome would be even if no one else could've imagined it.

"I sure did, I never doubted it at all. I knew it was my time," he said. "Leading up to the first title fight (against Tucker) in '87 I was actually given a pretty decent chance of maybe winning the fight but losing that fight really made it seem like, 'He might as well pack it in. I don't know what he's fighting for.' Then coming back around and getting a title shot again against Godzilla, was like, 'Oh my God, he's really gonna kill himself!' Then succeeding was the ultimate, 'I told you so.'

"I'd been through so much. That was my second shot at the world title, I'd made all the corrections and I was ready for the second time. I wasn't gonna let this opportunity escape me."

He didn't, of course. His 10th-round knockout of Tyson remains perhaps the greatest upset in boxing history. The glory didn't last long.

"I could have fought anybody I wanted to," he said. "But I wanted to fight (Evander) Holyfield because he was a top-notch contender and I knew that would get me motivated to train hard."

Douglas was anything but prepared for Holyfield in October 1990, entering the ring 15½ pounds heavier than he weighed for the Tyson fight. Holyfield put Douglas down in only three rounds. At least he was paid well for his trouble: He earned the largest purse in boxing history at the time, a whopping $24,075,000, and then retired.

He went five-plus years without fighting, during which time his weight ballooned to near 400 pounds and he fell into a diabetic coma that threatened his life in 1994. He survived and made a comeback in 1996 but retired for good in 1999.

Today Douglas, 55, lives where it all began in his hometown of Columbus, Ohio. He's been married to his wife, Bertha, for 30 years and they have four sons. He works with kids at a local boxing gym, Thompson Community Recreation Center.

"I'm enjoying life again," he said. "It's like being back at the beginning only now I'm the coach."

Douglas agreed to speak about the best fighters he fought in 10 categories.

BEST JAB

Tony Tucker: He had a quick jab, he measures you. He worked off the jab really well. He had the ability to box and he had a great jab.

BEST CHIN

Oliver McCall: Oliver McCall was tough. He was a durable fighter, he was a strong fighter. You would think by his size you could muscle him and overwhelm him with shots but he was pretty strong and kind of elusive and his defense wasn't bad.

FASTEST HANDS

Tucker: When you say hand speed there's a difference. Holyfield would throw and step around but I would say Tucker might be quicker standing in front of you. But Holyfield had some great legs, stepping around. In that situation, moving and punching, I would say Holyfield but standing straight in front of you I'd say Tucker. I'd have to say Tucker.

FASTEST FEET

Evander Holyfield: Holyfield had some good foot movement, he pivoted pretty good. He had good hands as well. He was very active and threw good combinations.

SMARTEST

Mike Tyson: They all had their advantages. Tyson, student of the game, was in there till the end, showed a lot of savvy.

STRONGEST

Holyfield: I never felt like a guy was stronger. I measure it a little different: Who can take a shot and come back? I would have to say Holyfield.

BEST PUNCHER

Holyfield: I would say Holyfield. What made his power different was speed. He had good hand speed.

BEST DEFENSE

Rick Enis: I would say early in my career I fought a kid out of Indiana, Rick Enis. He was very elusive. I had to throw a lot of jabs, different jabs to figure him out. I had to make some adjustments. This was when we were fighting six-round fights. It took some time to catch up with him. It was a good fight at that point in my career. By the time I got to 10-round main event level everything was pretty sharp because fighting a man like Rick Enis made it easy.

BEST SKILLS

Tucker: I would say Tucker. Conventional boxer, worked off the jab, kept that jab busy. Once Tucker got into a rhythm he was to me deadly. He worked well off his jab and kept you at bay.

BEST OVERALL

Holyfield: That's pretty tough. I would say it's between Holyfield, Tyson, McCall and Tucker. I'd say Holyfield. He was always ready – mentally, physically – each and every time out of the gate.

MIKE POWELL /ALLSPORT

By **David Greisman**

BUSINESS OVER PLEASURE

SOMETIMES THE ECONOMIC SIDE OF BOXING IS AN OBSTACLE TO THE GRATIFICATION OF FANS

The new heavyweight champion had spent barely two weeks on the throne before he was stripped of one of his belts. A welterweight world title was essentially handed to a sanctioning body's favored boxer. And the two best light heavyweights in the world finally stood just feet from each other in the same ring, a moment that might be the closest they ever come to fighting each other.

This is our sport. But really, that's only part of the picture. If boxing were just a sport, then the business side of it wouldn't have as much of an impact on what goes on, or doesn't, inside the ring. That's because boxing is more than just a business. It's several businesses. It's promoters competing for television dates and title belts, working the system and working against each other.

Sometimes when they win, we win as well. Too often, however, we're left spending more time dissecting why certain fights happen while others don't rather than discussing who is fighting and when.

Three consecutive weekends earlier this year exemplified just how much maneuvering,

Charles Martin wears the belt that Tyson Fury won fairly and squarely less than two months earlier.

manipulating, scheming and strategizing go on — and how much of the business we don't see affects the boxing we do.

Vyacheslav Glazkov and Charles Martin fought in January for a heavyweight belt that barely a month beforehand had been around Tyson Fury's waist, one of four titles (including THE RING's) captured in a victory over Wladimir Klitschko. Fury had accepted a rematch clause in his negotiations with Klitschko, meaning he had no choice but to face the Ukrainian again in what for him would be an even more lucrative fight.

Main Events, which promotes Glazkov, knew of Fury's obligations and pushed for Glazkov to get his mandatory title shot. Its request came before Fury's team could ask the IBF to make Glazkov wait until after the rematch. Main Events was acting in the best interests of its fighter while also fragmenting the division, further confusing casual fans who may wonder why there is one legitimate heavyweight champion but three men with world titles.

Fury lost his IBF title because he must face a more deserving opponent — the former champion — rather than Glazkov, who was undefeated but who some felt should've been on the short end of some close decisions. The IBF at least followed its rules in stripping Fury, which is more than can usually be said for the strange and subjective choices that sanctioning bodies typically make.

That eventually brought us a fight between Glazkov and Martin on the undercard of a fight with the other heavyweight titleholder, Deontay Wilder, who defended against Artur Szpilka. Martin won when Glazkov suffered a severe knee injury and couldn't continue. He barely did anything to earn the belt. Then again, he'd barely done anything to earn the shot.

Martin nevertheless rose up through the rankings. And his victory was good news for Al Haymon, his adviser, who also has Wilder. After beating Szpilka, Wilder said he would defend against capable mandatory challenger Alexander Povetkin. That may happen given how big a payday Povetkin might bring.

Tyson Fury (right) was the victim of greed.

Don't be surprised if the WBC allows a Wilder vs. Martin unification first, though. Just last year Haymon refused to include the WBC title during a broadcast but now he and the WBC are cozy again. The 147- and 154-pound belts held by Floyd Mayweather Jr. remained with Mayweather even after he retired, at least until the WBC ordered tournaments to fill the vacancies.

Except these tournaments aren't true tournaments, for the grand prizes are being given away before the finale. Danny Garcia, who the WBC allowed to hold a belt at 140 pounds despite its silly rule against unified titleholders, fought Robert Guerrero in January and won a unanimous decision and the title. Guerrero at least performed better than a fighter some believed wasn't deserving of the opportunity. Both are Haymon boxers. So are Jermell Charlo and John Jackson, who are supposed to meet for the junior middleweight belt.

There's no guarantee that future rounds of the "tournaments" will ever happen. A significant number of the top welterweights are with Haymon. The guy Garcia was to face next, the guy who should've gotten the title shot to begin with, according to the WBC's rankings, is Amir Khan. Except Khan will challenge middleweight champion Canelo Alvarez this May. Garcia was handed a title shot, and then a title, that others will have to earn — if they ever get a chance.

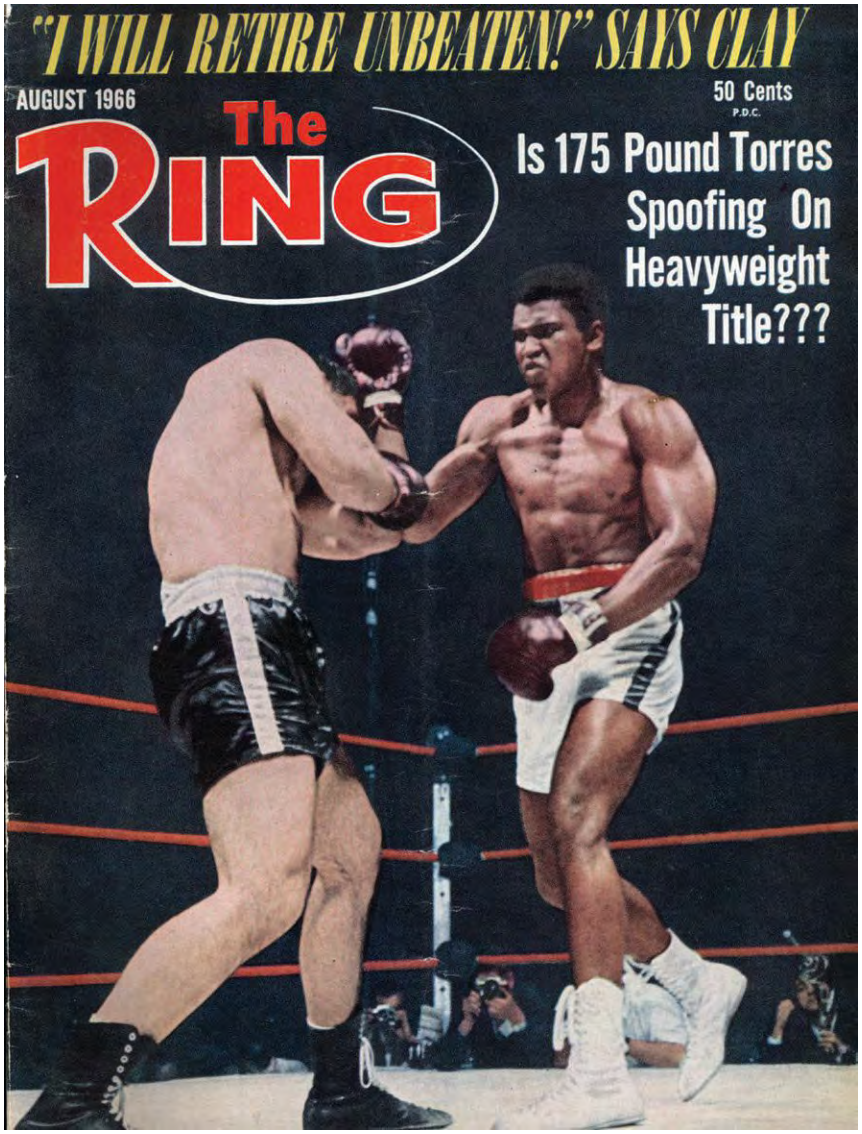
That's less maddening than Adonis Stevenson confronting Sergey Kovalev after Kovalev won his rematch over Jean Pascal in Montreal. Their bout has failed to materialize after more than two years. At first that was because Stevenson signed with Haymon. Then it was at least in large part because Kovalev signed a new deal with HBO, a deal Main Events could've postponed if not for a desire to protect its relationship with the network.

After all, Main Events has other fighters it needs to position and push. That's why we got a dreary bout involving welterweight prospect Dmitry Mikhaylenko on the Kovalev-Pascal II undercard. Kovalev won't fight anywhere but HBO and Stevenson wants Showtime to be involved in a co-promotion, which means we won't get a Stevenson fight and might not get anything compelling from Kovalev until a potential fight with Andre Ward.

Stevenson at least has a number of possible light heavyweight foes who also are with Haymon. It's long past time he face one of them.

There's nothing we can do about it, though, except watch — or don't. We can speak with our eyes and our wallets. We haven't been speaking loud enough. We're in love with the sport. So we let the promoters do their business no matter the mess they leave behind.

DON EMMERT STF/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



George Chuvalo (left, on the RING cover) caught Muhammad Ali at the wrong time.

THE GREATEST AT HIS GREATEST

MUHAMMAD ALI WAS AT HIS BREATHTAKING BEST AROUND THE TIME HE BEAT GEORGE CHUVALO

March 29, 2016, marks the 50th anniversary of the heavyweight championship fight between Muhammad Ali and George Chuvalo in Toronto. Standing alone, it wasn't a particularly important fight. Ali carved out a lopsided unanimous decision in a one-sided encounter.

"He was just so damn fast," Chuvalo told me years later. "When he got old, it was different. But when he was young, when he moved his legs and hands at the same time, when he synchronized them, he was great. When he was young, he threw his punches when he was in motion. That is, he'd be out of punching range, and as he moved into range, he'd already begun to throw the punch. So if you waited until he got into range to punch back, he beat you every time."

Ali-Chuvalo is significant because it marked the start of an extraordinary run. Over a 12-month period in 1966 and 1967, Ali successfully defended his championship seven times and emerged as the most beautiful (and, arguably, the greatest) fighter ever.

Ali's other victims during that remarkable 12 months a half-century ago were Henry Cooper, Brian London, Karl Mildenberger, Cleveland Williams, Ernie Terrell, and Zora Folley.

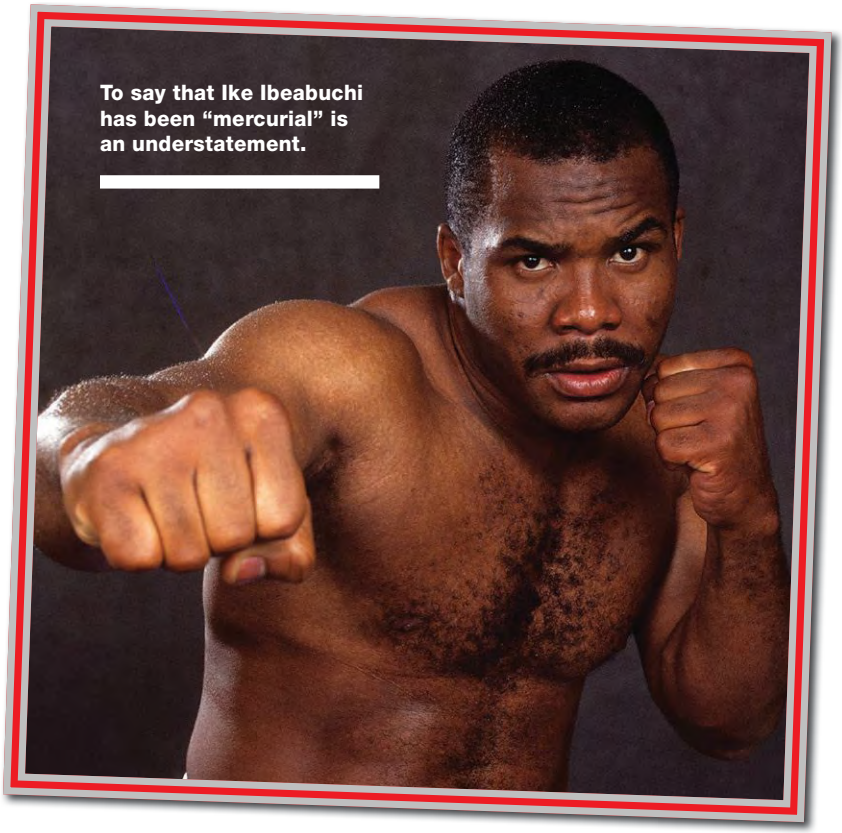
In Ali's view, the Williams fight (contested in Houston on Nov. 14, 1966) was the best performance of his career. The bout lasted seven minutes and eight seconds, during which Ali landed more than 100 punches, scored four knockdowns and was hit a total of three times.

That was the highpoint in a one-year demonstration of sustained excellence unparalleled in the history of heavyweight boxing.

★

Word that 43-year-old Nigerian heavyweight Ike Ibeabuchi has been released from prison and plans a return to boxing has prompted a flood of memories.

Ibeabuchi posted a 20-0 (15 knockouts) record highlighted by victories over David Tua and Chris Byrd. He was a force in the heavyweight division and had the look of a future champion. But there were problems. Ibeabuchi's



To say that Ike Ibeabuchi has been "mercurial" is an understatement.

personality was – shall we say – mercurial. There were wild mood swings and outbursts of temper leading to unacceptable conduct.

In July 1999, Ibeabuchi telephoned a sex-industry service and asked that a lap dancer be sent to his room at The Mirage Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. According to testimony, the dancer insisted on cash payment in advance, at which point the 245-pound fighter became enraged and raped her. This came on the heels of similar allegations against Ibeabuchi made by two other outcall dancers in Nevada and Arizona. Ibeabuchi was sentenced to five-to-30 years in prison as the result of a plea deal with prosecutors.

Cedric Kushner promoted Ibeabuchi for much of the boxer's career and was frustrated by his erratic behavior.

Kushner once had lunch at The Palm in New York with Ibeabuchi, Steve Munisteri (Ibeabuchi's manager) and Lou DiBella (then with HBO). At one point during the conversation, Ibeabuchi became enraged, grabbed a streak knife and jammed it into the table.

On another occasion, Kushner told associates, "Ike telephoned me at 3 o'clock in the morning and complained that he was seeing demons. I understand why Ike was seeing demons. What I don't understand is why he called me."

★

The most recognizable mustache in boxing belonged to artist LeRoy Neiman. Kushner's walrus mustache earned the promoter second place. With their passing, honors fell to Pat English.

English, now in his mid-60s, is the attorney for Main Events. He grew a beard when he was in college and shaved it down to a conservatively-trimmed walrus mustache once he started practicing law. That's the look he was known by for decades. But he's currently clean-shaven.

Why?

"I got a haircut around Christmas," English explained. "And the barber trimmed my mustache. I didn't like the way he did his job so I tried evening it out. And I still didn't like the way it looked so I shaved it off."

Will English grow the mustache back?

"That's privileged information," the attorney says.

Main Events is notable as a boxing promotional company, among other reasons, because it's run by women. How do they feel about English's new look?

President and CEO: Kathy Duva: "I find it shocking. For a moment, I didn't recognize him."

Publicist Ellen Haley: "At first, I couldn't figure out what was different. I thought maybe Pat wasn't wearing his glasses."

Vice President of Operations and matchmaker Jolene Mizzone: "It makes Pat look younger. But his mouth is still big."

★

Sugar Ray Leonard is enshrined in boxing lore because of his victories over Thomas Hearns, Roberto Duran, Marvin Hagler and Wilfredo Benitez. But two of his other triumphs provide an interesting footnote to ring history.

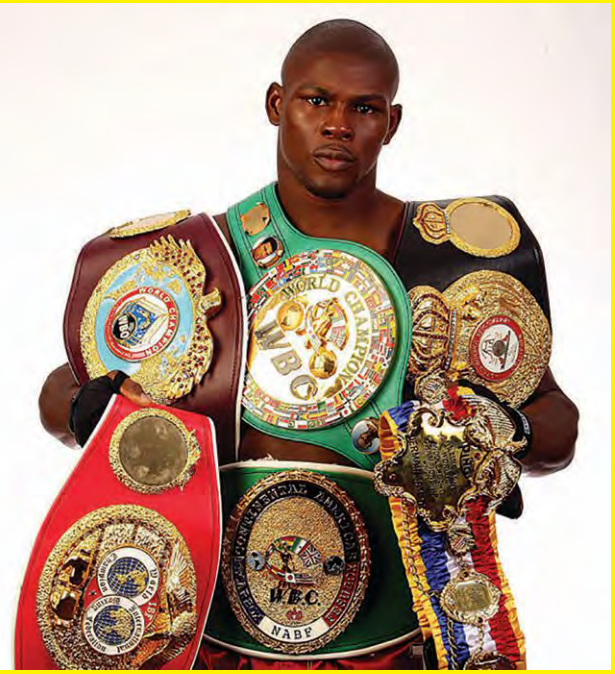
Leonard fought 11 times in 1978. One of those fights was an April 13 third-round knockout of Bobby Haymon at the Capitol Centre in Landover, Maryland. Then, on Sept. 9, Leonard stopped Floyd Joy Mayweather in the 10th round at the Civic Center in Providence, Rhode Island.

For the uninitiated, that's knockout victories over Al Haymon's brother and Floyd Mayweather Jr.'s father in the same year. RING

Thomas Hauser can be reached by email at thauser@rcn.com. His most recent book – "A Hurting Sport: An Inside Look at Another Year in Boxing" – was published recently by the University of Arkansas Press.

TRUMP: AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES; NELS BRAD BARKEY/GETTY IMAGES FOR HBO LATINO ON:

 By **Brian Harty**



The heights Jermain Taylor reached make his fall all the more tragic.

JUDGMENT DAY

Jermain Taylor once stood on the summit of boxing, nothing but clear sky above him. He was an HBO darling and Arkansas' most famous son since Bill Clinton. He possessed the RING, IBF, WBA, WBC and WBO middleweight titles – the only fighter in the multi-belt era besides Bernard Hopkins to hold a complete collection. It was a long, long way to fall.

Impact will occur on April 19, when Taylor is scheduled to be sentenced after pleading guilty to an equally formidable collection of crimes that date back to an incident in August 2014, when he allegedly shot his cousin (non-fatally). In another incident he allegedly shot at a man who was with his wife and children when one of the kids dropped Taylor's championship belt at a Martin Luther King Day parade. He allegedly had drugs. He allegedly assaulted a man in rehab.

In early December all those allegedlies added up to these realities: six counts of aggravated assault, two counts of terroristic threatening, one count of second-degree battery and 54 years of potential prison time.

Taylor was undefeated in 28 fights before a pair of life-altering losses to Kelly Pavlik in 2007 and 2008. The slide continued in '09 with losses to Carl Froch and Arthur Abraham, both of which ended with brutal 12th-round knockouts and resulted in Taylor's suspension for brain injuries. You'd think that would be the end and you'd be wrong.

Taylor was somehow cleared to fight two years later and launched a widely condemned comeback, eventually winning a title with a unanimous decision against Sam Soliman in October 2014. Before that fight was a short Facebook video featuring Taylor firing a gun, singing country music, rocking a drum solo and promising he'd "never lose to another white boy." He closed the montage with this benediction: "F—k you, God bless you."

Taylor's guilty plea, which he changed from "not guilty" in order to avoid a trial, will give his victims time to make travel arrangements for the sentencing. It will also, in yet another insult in this string of injuries, allow him to keep training in Florida. …

Pavlik has fared better than Taylor, relatively, but notched up another arrest of his own in early February after allegedly shooting his friend with a pellet gun. He faces up to 180 days in jail.

Gunmen with real bullets opened fire at the weigh-in for a fight between **Jamie Kavanagh** and **Antonio Jao** in Dublin, Ireland, on Feb. 5, killing one person and wounding two others. A statement given to the BBC claimed the shooting was retribution for the death of Real IRA member Alan Ryan in 2012.

Reportedly owing $750,000 in child support, former titleholder **Antonio Tarver** was ordered by a judge in Florida to turn over his championship belt collection, along with his Olympic bronze medal and Mercedes, to his ex-girlfriend so she could sell them. Tarver claimed he has been struggling to make money since testing positive for synthetic testosterone in 2012.

All the talk was of actor **Sean Penn** interviewing **Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman** before the Mexican drug lord's arrest in January but former three-division titleholder **Fernando Montiel** played his own part in the story. The boxer and his kids were awakened in the early morning by soldiers tracking one of El Chapo's henchmen; they found him hiding in one of Montiel's rooms after having broken in.

Trainer and manager **Richie Giachetti** died of a reported heart attack on Feb. 3 at the age of 76. He was behind **Larry Holmes'** rise to a heavyweight championship in 1978 and worked with **Earnie Shavers, Aaron Pryor, Riddick Bowe** and **Mike Tyson** post-**Buster Douglas**, among others. He also worked as an adviser to **Sylvester Stallone** for "Rocky IV."

In Austin, Texas, it was the trainer mourning for his fighter. In 1983, former pro **Richard Lord** had been given the assignment of getting singer **David Bowie** into shape for his Serious Moonlight Tour. In an interview with NPR station KUT, Lord said Bowie was having "Elvis Presley phobia" about surviving the demands of touring and "was willing to go all out" for six weeks. He added that Bowie was delighted when nobody in the gym recognized him. Bowie died on Jan. 10.

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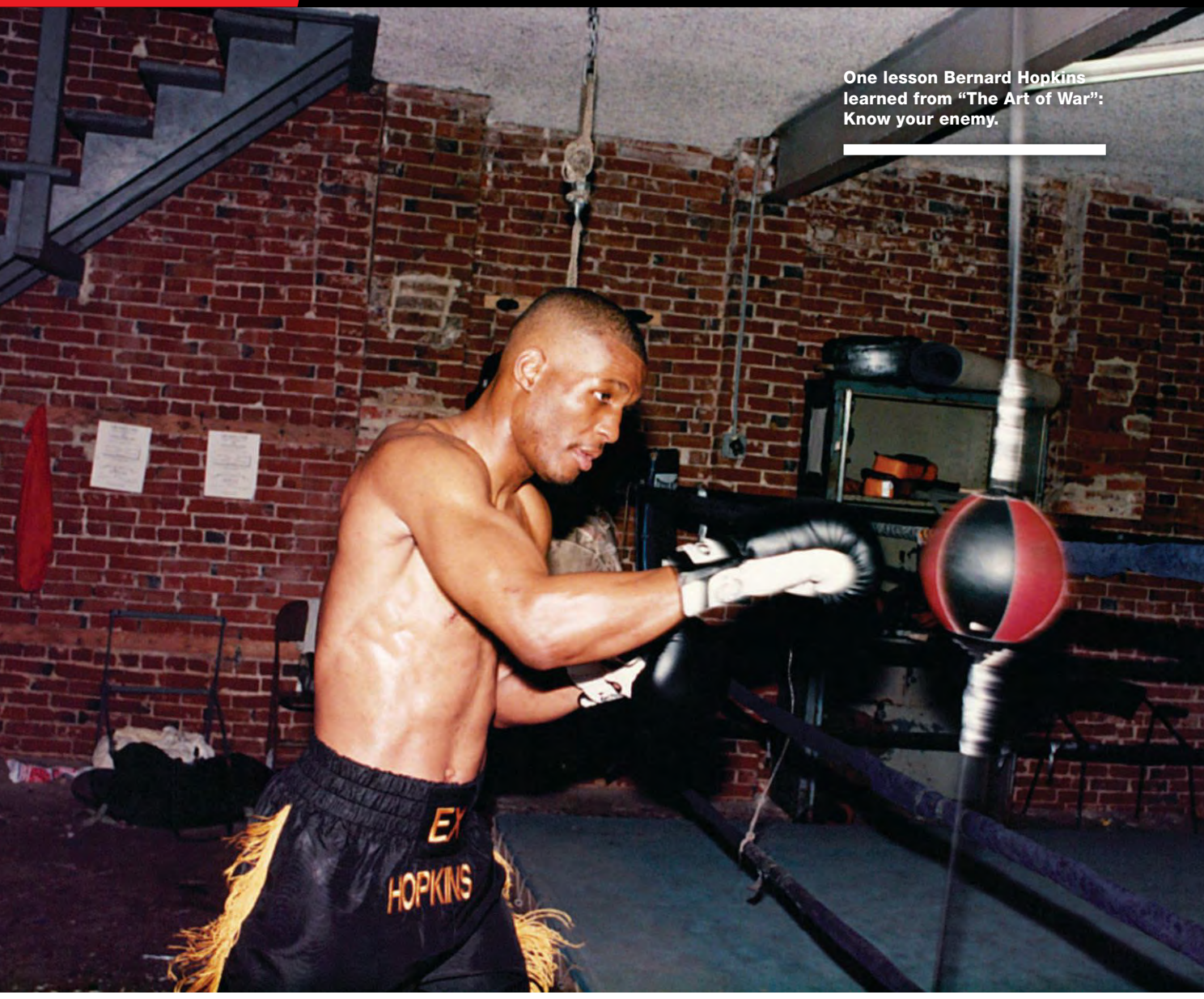


One lesson Bernard Hopkins learned from "The Art of War": Know your enemy.

'A BOOK THAT CHANGED MY LIFE'

BERNARD HOPKINS DESCRIBES THE PROFOUND IMPACT 'THE ART OF WAR' HAS HAD ON HIM

This is one in a series of columns by future Hall of Famer Bernard Hopkins, who – through contributor Joseph Santoliquito – gives us his thoughts on various subjects important to every boxer and fan. This issue: How the ancient Chinese military text 'The Art of War' speaks to Hopkins.

Around 1987, during my incarceration, there was this older guy who everyone respected and had these theories and logical answers about anything from street fighting to how to use offense and defense to boxing. It intrigued me and made me wonder where he knew all of this stuff from.

It was over 25 years ago and that's how I was introduced to "The Art of War" in the Graterford Prison library.

I would have time to read in the cell and we had amateur boxing, which they allowed back then in prison. I read "The Art of War" just to deal with the people I encountered every day. I wanted to deal with the various strategies of the mind and how to deal with people on all fronts.

I can honestly say it's a book that changed my life and outlook on many things. I learned through "The Art of War" that you can use your mind to win. You don't have to be physical all of the time. You could win being social or even defensive. Whatever it is that you're dealing with someone opposing you, the book taught me that you have to have a mind strategy.

I can still remember large segments of "The Art of War" that I read way back then. It's about getting into your opponent's head and becoming them, studying them and their tendencies. You need to know what's going to happen before it happens.

"The Art of War" has guided me in both my personal life and my professional life. When you're in combat in the ring, the book taught me that I could never let my emotions be my answer. That is something I think young fighters are missing today. These guys let their emotions dictate how a fight may go.

You may see me act outrageous, like I did prior to the Felix Trinidad fight, but that's just it – it's an act. No one was able to see my true emotions, because without emotion, you think better. Your mind is clear.

I take pieces of "The Art of War" all the way up until now, 2016, with me everywhere I go. On the business side, "The Art of War" teaches you to think ahead and go in prepared to face anything. You have to sometimes be deceptive. "The Art of War" teaches that you may sometimes make people think you're going this way or going that way.

All the time, you know where you're going.

Something else very vital about "The Art of War": Anyone can pick up the book and study the principles but knowing how and when to use the principles is another issue. I'm not giving away any deep secrets or major strategies.

You want to know why? Even though I'm giving them this message, most people are lazy. Most people wait for others to do their work and then they try to take the credit. "The Art of War" says that you should always be first when you're going to attack because, most of the time, your opponent won't be prepared when you attack.

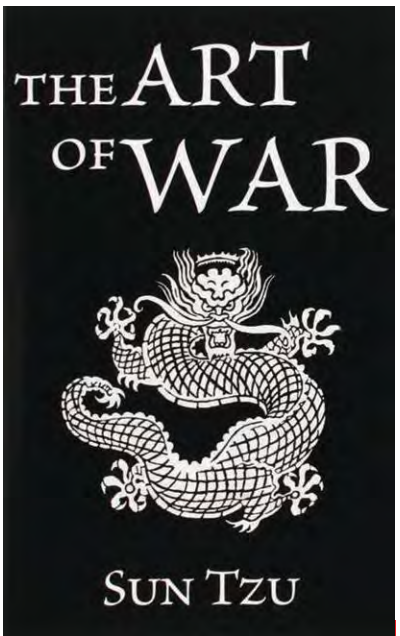
The book has changed everything about my life. You read the message, then understand the message, and then you incorporate the message into your life and you live the message. That takes time and determination. It takes work to discipline yourself and not show emotion when it's killing you inside to let go.

You have to believe in the message long term, not short term. It's when the messages of "The Art of War" sink in and you absorb it to the point when certain actions you train to do become instinctive.

You can read the book as much as you want. But if you don't make the effort to, one, know your enemy; two, know yourself; and three, know your plan, none of it will help.

If you know your enemy and don't know yourself, you are your enemy. If you don't know your enemy and know yourself, you're still in trouble because you'll underestimate your enemy. If you don't have a plan, you're cooked.

I've turned a lot of negatives in my life into positives. And I wouldn't have been introduced to "The Art of War" if I wasn't in Graterford. RING



TWO OF BERNARD HOPKINS' FAVORITE EXCERPTS

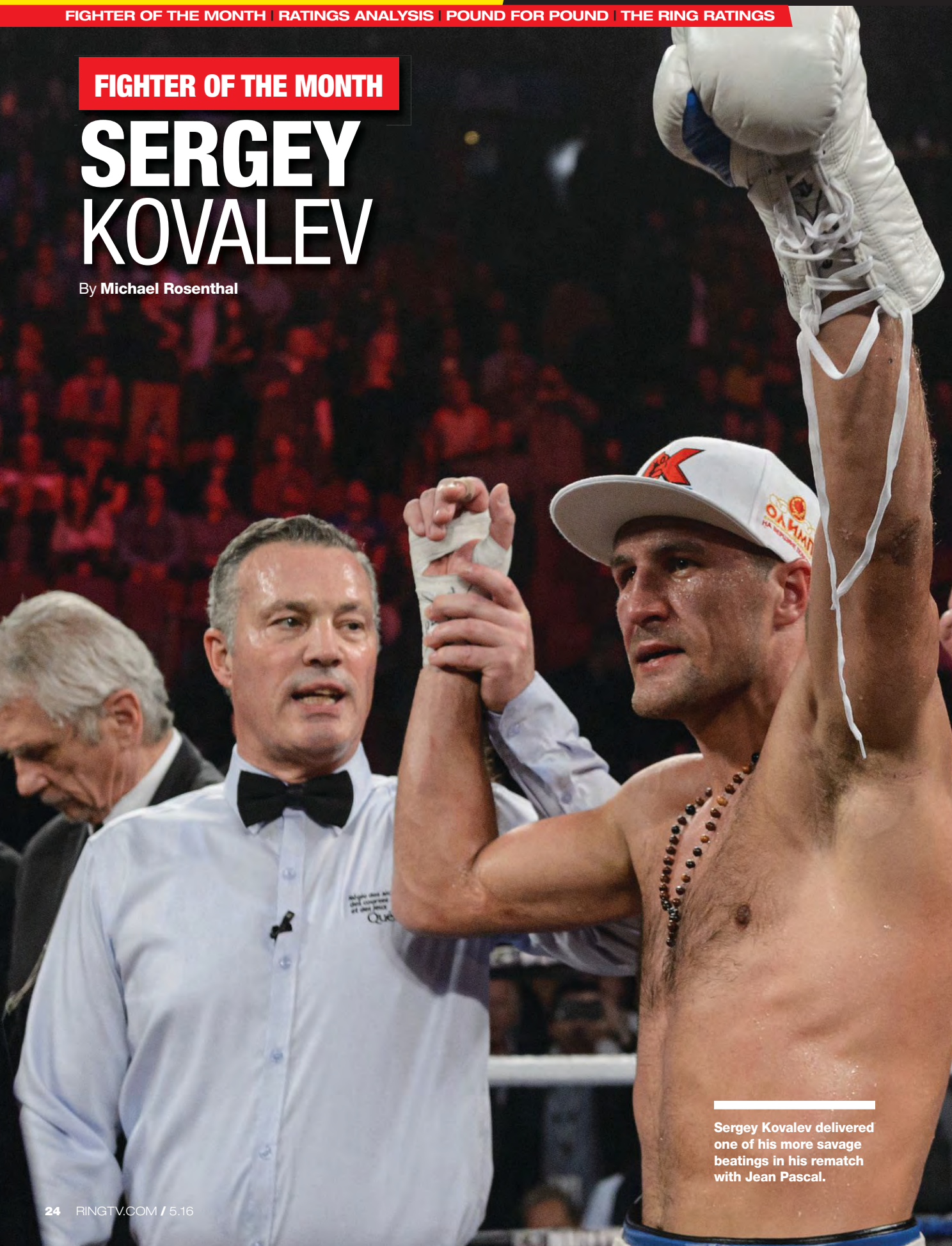
"If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle."

"If your enemy is secure at all points, be prepared for him. If he is in superior strength, evade him. If your opponent is temperamental, seek to irritate him. Pretend to be weak, that he may grow arrogant. If he is taking his ease, give him no rest. If his forces are united, separate them. If sovereign and subject are in accord, put division between them. Attack him where he is unprepared, appear where you are not expected."

FIGHTER OF THE MONTH

SERGEY KOVALEV

By **Michael Rosenthal**



Sergey Kovalev delivered one of his more savage beatings in his rematch with Jean Pascal.

MINAS PANAGIOTAKIS/GETTY IMAGES

No one was surprised that Sergey Kovalev stopped Jean Pascal on Jan. 30 in Montreal. He did it once before, only 10 months earlier.

It was the savage nature of how Kovalev dismantled a former 175-pound titleholder that made an impression. Pascal put up some resistance early but was a beaten man by the fifth round, Kovalev having pounded the fight out of him.

The Canadian survived two more rounds on pure guts but his trainer, Freddie Roach, saved him from himself after the seventh.

Kovalev (29-0-1, 26 knockouts) retained his three major light heavyweight belts, including the seventh successful defense of the WBO belt he won by beating Nathan Cleverly in 2013. More important, the manner in which he broke down Pascal (30-4-1, 17 KOs) bolstered in the most violent terms his reputation as a fan-friendly destroyer.

Is there anyone more fun to watch?

After the fight, in the ring, Kovalev was confronted by WBC 175-pound titleholder Adonis Stevenson but that fight isn't likely to happen. Instead, it appears as if Kovalev is headed for a showdown with former 168-pound champ Andre Ward.

Kovalev has a solid resume but has never faced anyone the caliber of Ward, a gifted boxer with a proven track record yet relatively few miles on his odometer. The former Olympic champion is smaller than Kovalev – and his inactivity could work against him – but it's hard to match his skill set.

If Kovalev can get past Ward, then we would have to go a step further from our earlier question. We would have to ask: Is he the best fighter in the world? RING

Charles Martin (right) claimed a heavyweight belt when he beat Vyacheslav Glazkov.

POUND FOR POUND: No change.

HEAVYWEIGHTS: Charles Martin (unrated last month) became the second American currently wearing a heavyweight belt with an anticlimactic stoppage of previously undefeated Ukrainian Vyacheslav Glazkov, whose knee gave out in the second round. Glazkov (No. 7 last month) fell out of the ratings and the newly crowned Martin came in at No. 10.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: No change.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: Jean Pascal (No. 4 last month) received no compassion from No. 1-rated Sergey Kovalev in their rematch but fortunately Freddie Roach, Pascal's trainer, was there to call off the beating after Round 7. Pascal dropped to No. 10 on the list.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No change.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No change.

WELTERWEIGHTS: Danny Garcia picked up a belt and rose from No. 8 to No. 7 after a solid unanimous-decision victory over Robert Guerrero (unrated).

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: No change.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: No change.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: Evgeny Gradovich (No. 7 last month) eked out a majority decision over unrated Jesus Galicia but has struggled in his last few fights. Thus, he slipped a notch to No. 8.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: Guillermo Rigondeaux was stripped of his RING championship and moved to No. 1 after announcing that his next foe would be James Dickens (unrated). When that fight happens in mid-March it will have been almost three years since Rigondeaux faced Nonito Donaire, his last opponent rated in the Top 5. Rigo's demotion pushed Californian Manuel Avila off the list.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: Randy Caballero (No. 6 last month) of the U.S. went up in weight and departed the ratings, making room for Venezuela's Liborio Solis to enter at No. 10.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: No change.

FLYWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: No change.

STRAWWEIGHTS: Knockout CP Freshmart (No. 4 last month) rang up a wide unanimous-decision victory over No. 7-rated Carlos Buitrago. Freshmart climbed to No. 3 and Buitrago slipped to No. 9.

Welterweight Danny Garcia (left) moved up a notch after outpointing a game Robert Guerrero.

THE FIGURES UNDER THE FIGHTERS' NAMES INDICATE: WEEKS IN THE RATINGS • COUNTRY • RECORD

HEAVYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT UNLIMITED

C TYSON FURY
208 • U.K. • 25-0-0 (18 KOs)

1. WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
560 • Ukraine • 64-4-0 (53 KOs)

2. ALEXANDER POVETKIN
434 • Russia • 30-1-0 (22 KOs)

3. DEONTAY WILDER
118 • U.S. • 36-0-0 (35 KOs)

4. KUBRAT PULEV
226 • Bulgaria • 21-1-0 (11 KOs)

5. LUIS ORTIZ
8 • Cuba • 24-0-0 (21 KOs)

6. BERMANE STIVERNE
148 • Canada • 25-2-1 (21 KOs)

7. BRYANT JENNINGS
99 • U.S. • 19-2-0 (10 KOs)

8. RUSLAN CHAGAEV
66 • Uzbek. • 34-2-1 (21 KOs)

9. ANTHONY JOSHUA
15 • U.K. • • 15-0-0 (15 KOs)

10. CHARLES MARTIN
4 • U.S. • 23-0-1 (21 KOs)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 200 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. GRIGORY DROZD
123 • Russia • 40-1-0 (28 KOs)

2. DENIS LEBEDEV
315 • Russia • 28-2-0 (21 KOs)

3. KRZYSZTOF GLOWACKI
26 • Poland • 25-0-0 (16 KOs)

4. MARCO HUCK
164 • Germany • 38-3-1 (26 KOs)

5. ILUNGA MAKABU
135 • Congo • 19-1-0 (18 KOs)

6. FIRAT ARSLAN
171 • Germany • 36-8-2 (22 KOs)

7. YOURI KALENGA
86 • Congo • 22-2-0 (15 KOs)

8. OLEKSANDR USYK
19 • Ukraine • 9-0-0 (9 KOs)

9. VICTOR RAMIREZ
14 • Argentina • 22-2-1 (17 KOs)

10. OLA AFOLABI
14 • U.K. • 22-4-4 (11 KOs)

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 175 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. SERGEY KOVALEV
160 • Russia • 29-0-1 (26 KOs)

2. ADONIS STEVENSON
140 • Canada • 27-1-0 (22 KOs)

3. BERNARD HOPKINS
506 • U.S. • 55-7-2 (32 KOs)

4. ELEIDER ALVAREZ
100 • Colombia • 19-0-0 (10 KOs)

5. JUERGEN BRAEHMER
189 • Germany • 47-2-0 (35 KOs)

6. ISAAC CHILEMBA
198 • Malawi • 24-3-2 (10 KOs)

7. ANDRZEJ FONFARA
91 • Poland • 28-3-0 (16 KOs)

8. ARTUR BETERBIEV
61 • Russia • 9-0-0 (9 KOs)

9. VYACHESLAV SHABRANSKYY
8 • Ukraine • 15-0-0 (12 KOs)

10. JEAN PASCAL
135 • Canada • 30-4-1 (17 KOs)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 168 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. ARTHUR ABRAHAM
331 • Armenia • 44-4-0 (29 KOs)

2. JAMES DEGALE
140 • U.K. • 22-1-0 (14 KOs)

3. BADOU JACK
42 • Sweden • 20-1-1 (12 KOs)

4. GILBERTO RAMIREZ
83 • Mexico • 33-0-0 (24 KOs)

5. ANDRE DIRRELL
76 • U.S. • 24-2-0 (16 KOs)

6. GEORGE GROVES
218 • U.K. • 22-3-0 (17 KOs)

7. ANTHONY DIRRELL
78 • U.S. • 28-1-1 (22 KOs)

8. FEDOR CHUDINOV
40 • Russia • 14-0-0 (10 KOs)

9. CALLUM SMITH
36 • U.K. • 18-0-0 (13 KOs)

10. ROBERT STIEGLITZ
339 • Russia • 48-5-1 (28 KOs)

KEVORK DJANSEZIAN/GETTY IMAGES

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 160 LBS

C CANELO ALVAREZ
12 • Mexico • 46-1-1 (32 KOs)

1. GENNADY GOLOVKIN
218 • Kaz. • 34-0-0 (31 KOs)

2. DANIEL JACOBS
61 • U.S. • 31-1-0 (28 KOs)

3. BILLY JOE SAUNDERS
63 • U.K. • 23-0-0 (12 KOs)

4. DAVID LEMIEUX
37 • Canada • 34-3-0 (31 KOs)

5. ANDY LEE
61 • Ireland • 34-3-1 (24 KOs)

6. PETER QUILLIN
193 • U.S. • 32-1-1 (23 KOs)

7. HASSAN N'DAM
108 • Cameroon • 31-2-0 (18 KOs)

8. CHRIS EUBANK JR.
44 • U.K. • 21-1-0 (16 KOs)

9. DANIEL GEALE
348 • Australia • 31-4-0 (16 KOs)

10. MICHEL SORO
33 • France • 27-1-1 (17 KOs)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 154 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. ERISLANDY LARA
241 • Cuba • 22-2-2 (13 KOs)

2. AUSTIN TROUT
193 • U.S. • 30-2-0 (17 KOs)

3. MIGUEL COTTO
12 • P.R. • 40-5-0 (33 KOs)

4. JERMELL CHARLO
118 • U.S. • 27-0-0 (12 KOs)

5. JERMALL CHARLO
87 • U.S. • 23-0-0 (18 KOs)

6. DEMETRIUS ANDRADE
17 • U.S. • 22-0-0 (15 KOs)

7. VANES MARTIROSYAN
323 • U.S. • 36-2-1 (21 KOs)

8. JULIAN WILLIAMS
61 • U.S. • 21-0-1 (13 KOs)

9. LIAM SMITH
22 • U.K. • 22-0-1 (12 KOs)

10. CARLOS MOLINA
241 • Mexico • 23-6-2 (7 KOs)

WELTERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 147 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. KELL BROOK
251 • U.K. • 35-0-0 (24 KOs)

2. MANNY PACQUIAO
227 • Phil. • 57-6-2 (38 KOs)

3. AMIR KHAN
93 • U.K. • 31-3-0 (19 KOs)

4. TIM BRADLEY
192 • U.S. • 33-1-1 (13 KOs)

5. KEITH THURMAN
153 • U.S. • 26-0-0 (22 KOs)

6. SHAWN PORTER
114 • U.S. • 26-1-1 (16 KOs)

7. DANNY GARCIA
28 • U.S. • 32-0-0 (18 KOs)

8. SADAM ALI
39 • U.S. • 22-0-0 (13 KOs)

9. ERROL SPENCE
19 • U.S. • 19-0-0 (16 KOs)

10. DMITRY MIKHAYLENKO
6 • Russia • 21-0-0 (9 KOs)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 140 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. VIKTOR POSTOL
130 • Ukraine • 28-0-0 (12 KOs)

2. TERENCE CRAWFORD
43 • U.S. • 27-0-0 (19 KOs)

3. RUSLAN PROVODNIKOV
166 • Russia • 25-4-0 (18 KOs)

4. LUCAS MATTHYSSE
253 • Argentina • 37-4-0 (34 KOs)

5. ADRIEN BRONER
93 • U.S. • 31-2-0 (23 KOs)

6. JESSIE VARGAS
96 • U.S. • 26-1-0 (9 KOs)

7. MAURICIO HERRERA
55 • U.S. • 22-5-0 (7 KOs)

8. JOSE BENAVIDEZ
44 • U.S. • 24-0-0 (16 KOs)

9. ANTONIO OROZCO
19 • U.S. • 23-0-0 (15 KOs)

10. EDUARD TROYANOVSKY
11 • Russia • 23-0-0 (20 KOs)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 135 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. JORGE LINARES
101 • Venezuela • 40-3-0 (27 KOs)

2. DEJAN ZLATICANIN
44 • Montenegro • 21-0-0 (14 KOs)

3. SHARIF BOGERE
67 • Uganda • 27-1-0 (19 KOs)

4. RICHARD COMMEY
37 • Ghana • 23-0-0 (21 KOs)

5. TERRY FLANAGAN
18 • U.K. • 29-0-0 (12 KOs)

6. ANTHONY CROLLA
16 • U.K. • 30-4-3 (12 KOs)

7. RANCES BARTHELEMY
8 • Cuba • 24-0-0 (13 KOs)

8. DENIS SHAFIKOV
44 • Russia • 36-2-1 (19 KOs)

9. ARGENIS MENDEZ
18 • Dom. Rep. • 23-3-1 (12 KOs)

10. MIGUEL VAZQUEZ
288 • Mexico • 35-5-0 (13 KOs)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 130 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. TAKASHI UCHIYAMA
319 • Japan • 24-0-1 (20 KOs)

2. FRANCISCO VARGAS
83 • Mexico • 23-0-1 (17 KOs)

3. TAKASHI MIURA
149 • Japan • 29-3-2 (22 KOs)

4. ORLANDO SALIDO
73 • Mexico • 43-13 -3 (30 KOs)

5. ROMAN MARTINEZ
388 • P.R. • 29-2-3 (17 KOs)

6. JAVIER FORTUNA
67 • Dom. Rep. • 29-0-1 (21 KOs)

7. JOSE PEDRAZA
56 • P.R. • 21-0-0 (12 KOs)

8. BRYAN VASQUEZ
61 • Costa Rica • 34-2-0 (18 KOs)

9. SAUL RODRIGUEZ
12 • U.S. • 19-0-1 (14 KOs)

10. NICHOLAS WALTERS
8 • Jamaica • 26-0-1 (21 KOs)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 126 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. VASYL LOMACHENKO
93 • Ukraine • 5-1-0 (3 KOs)

2. GARY RUSSELL JR.
46 • U.S. • 26-1-0 (15 KOs)

3. LEO SANTA CRUZ
24 • U.S. • 31-0-1 (17 KOs)

4. LEE SELBY
100 • U.K. • 22-1-0 (8 KOs)

5. ABNER MARES
145 • Mexico • 29-2-1 (15 KOs)

6. SIMPIWE VETYEKA
114 • S. Africa • 28-3-0 (17 KOs)

7. JESUS CUELLAR
70 • Argentina • 28-1-0 (21 KOs)

8. EVGENY GRADOVICH
154 • Russia • 21-1-1 (9 KOs)

9. SATOSHI HOSONO
8 • Japan • 30-2-1 (20 KOs)

10. RONNY RIOS
12 • U.S. • 25-1-0 (10 KOs)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 122 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX
275 • Cuba • 16-0-0 (10 KOs)

2. SCOTT QUIGG
168 • U.K. • 31-0-2 (23 KOs)

3. CARL FRAMPTON
177 • U.K. • 21-0-0 (14 KOs)

4. NONITO DONAIRE
46 • Phil. • 36-3-0 (23 KOs)

5. GENESIS SERVANIA
100 • Phil. • 27-0-0 (11 KOs)

6. SHINGO WAKE
64 • Japan • 19-4-2 (11 KOs)

7. ALBERT PAGARA
58 • Phil. • 25-0-0 (18 KOs)

8. REY VARGAS
61 • Mexico • 25-0-0 (20 KOs)

9. JESSIE MAGDALENO
35 • U.S. • 22-0-0 (16 KOs)

10. JULIO CEJA
24 • Mexico • 30-1-0 (27 KOs)

HOW OUR RATINGS ARE COMPILED

Championship vacancies can be filled in the following two ways: 1. THE RING'S Nos. 1 and 2 contenders fight one another. 2. If the Nos. 1 and 2 contenders choose not to fight one another and No. 1 fights No. 3, that matchup could be for the RING title if the Editorial Board deems No. 3 worthy.

A champion can lose his belt in six situations: 1. The Champion loses a fight in the weight class in which he is champion; 2. The Champion moves to another weight class; 3. The Champion does not schedule a fight in any weight class for 18 months, although injuries and certain other unforeseen circumstances could be taken into consideration; 4. The Champion does not schedule a fight at his champion weight for 18 months (even if he fights at another weight); 5. The Champion does not schedule a fight with a Top-10 contender from any weight class for two years; 6. The Champion retires.

THE RING Editorial Board considers input from the Ratings Panel of boxing journalists from around the world and then decides collectively what changes will be made. That applies to both the pound-for-pound and divisional ratings.

Records provided by boxrec.com

BANTAMWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 118 LBS

C (VACANT)
1. SHINSUKE YAMANAKA
223 • Japan • 24-0-2 (17 KOs)
2. JUAN CARLOS PAYANO
72 • Dom. Rep. • 17-0-0 (8 KOs)
3. ANSELMO MORENO
411 • Panama • 35-4-1 (12 KOs)
4. JAMIE MCDONNELL
143 • U.K. • 27-2-1 (12 KOs)
5. TOMOKI KAMEDA
132 • Japan • 31-2-0 (19 KOs)
6. LEE HASKINS
35 • U.K. • 32-3-0 (14 KOs)
7. SURIYAN SOR RUNGVISAI
30 • Thailand • 46-6-1 (23 KOs)
8. PUNGLUANG SOR SINGYU
21 • Thailand • 51-3-0 (35 KOs)
9. MARLON TAPALES
8 • Phil. • 28-2-0 (11 KOs)
10. LIBORIO SOLIS
1 • Venezuela • 23-3-1 (10 KOs)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 115 LBS

C (VACANT)
1. NAOYA INOUE
58 • Japan • 9-0-0 (8 KOs)
2. CARLOS CUADRAS
196 • Mexico • 34-0-1 (26 KOs)
3. SRISAKET SOR RUNGVISAI
145 • Thailand • 38-4-1 (35 KOs)
4. ZOLANI TETE
115 • S. Africa • 22-3-0 (18 KOs)
5. OMAR NARVAEZ
301 • Argentina • 44-2-2 (23 KOs)
6. MCJOE ARROYO
87 • P.R. • 17-0-0 (8 KOs)
7. KOHEI KONO
17 • Japan • 31-8-1 (13 KOs)
8. OLEYDONG SITHSAMERCHAI
176 • Thailand • 58-1-1 (23 KOs)
9. ARTHUR VILLANUEVA
147 • Phil. • 28-1-0 (14 KOs)
10. LUIS CONCEPCION
21 • Panama • 34-4-0 (24 KOs)

FLYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 112 LBS

C ROMAN GONZALEZ
118 • Nicaragua • 44-0-0 (38 KOs)
1. JUAN FRANCISCO ESTRADA
149 • Mexico • 33-2-0 (24 KOs)
2. AMNAT RUENROENG
92 • Thailand • 17-0-0 (5 KOs)
3. KAZUTO IOKA
73 • Japan • 19-1-0 (11 KOs)
4. BRIAN VILORIA
240 • U.S. • 36-5-0 (22 KOs)
5. MORUTI MTHALANE
100 • S. Africa • 32-2-0 (21 KOs)
6. EDGAR SOSA
196 • Mexico • 51-9-0 (30 KOs)
7. JUAN CARLOS REVECO
228 • Argentina • 36-3-0 (19 KOs)
8. MCWILLIAMS ARROYO
75 • P.R. • 16-2-0 (14 KOs)
9. NAWAPHON POR CHOKCHAI
33 • Thailand • 32-0-0 (25 KOs)
10. JOHNRIEL CASIMERO
18 • Phil. • 21-3-0 (13 KOs)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 108 LBS

C DONNIE NIETES
227 • Phil. • 37-1-4 (21 KOs)
1. RYOICHI TAGUCHI
61 • Japan • 23-2-1 (10 KOs)
2. RANDY PETALCORIN
92 • Phil. • 23-1-1 (18 KOs)
3. YU KIMURA
11 • Japan • 18-2-1 (3 KOs)
4. PEDRO GUEVARA
150 • Mexico • 26-2-1 (17 KOs)
5. AKIRA YAEGASHI
6 • Japan • 23-5-0 (12 KOs)
6. JAVIER MENDOZA
44 • Mexico • 24-3-1 (19 KOs)
7. MILAN MELINDO
65 • Phil. • 33-2-0 (12 KOs)
8. ALBERTO ROSSEL
146 • Peru • 34-9-0 (13 KOs)
9. REY LORETO
44 • Phil. • 20-13-0 (12 KOs)
10. MOISES FUENTES
10 • Mexico • 23-2-1 (12 KOs)

STRAWWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 105 LBS

C (VACANT)
1. HEKKIE BUDLER
177 • S. Africa • 29-1-0 (9 KOs)
2. WANHENG MENAYOTHIN
243 • Thailand • 40-0-0 (15 KOs)
3. KNOCKOUT CP FRESHMART
71 • Thailand • 12-0-0 (6 KOs)
4. KOSEI TANAKA
67 • Japan • 6-0-0 (3 KOs)
5. JOSE ARGUMEDO
6 • Mexico • 16-3-1 (9 KOs)
6. KATSUNARI TAKAYAMA
150 • Japan • 30-8-0 (12 KOs)
7. CHAO ZHONG XIONG
65 • China • 26-6-1 (14 KOs)
8. DENVER CUELLO
65 • Phil. • 36-5-6 (24 KOs)
9. CARLOS BUITRAGO
74 • Nicaragua • 28-2-1 (16 KOs)
10. JESUS SILVESTRE
29 • Mexico • 31-6-0 (22 KOs)

POUND FOR POUND

1. ROMAN GONZALEZ
88 • Nicaragua • 44-0-0 (38 KOs)
2. SERGEY KOVALEV
48 • Russia • 29-0-1 (26 KOs)
3. GENNADY GOLOVKIN
52 • Kazakhstan • 34-0-0 (31 KOs)
4. ANDRE WARD
22 • U.S. • 28-0-0 (15 KOs)
5. GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX
129 • Cuba • 16-0-0 (10 KOs)
6. TERENCE CRAWFORD
41 • U.S. • 27-0-0 (19 KOs)
7. MANNY PACQUIAO
637 • Philippines • 57-6-2 (38 KOs)
8. CANELO ALVAREZ
12 • Mexico • 46-1-1 (32 KOs)
9. SHINSUKE YAMANAKA
38 • Japan • 24-0-2 (17 KOs)
10. TIM BRADLEY
11 • U.S. • 33-1-1 (13 KOs)

THE RING POLICY ON RATED BOXERS WHO TEST POSITIVE FOR PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING DRUGS

THE RING will remove from its ratings any rated boxer — including a champion — if such boxer at some point undergoes drug testing (Olympic-style or otherwise) and that boxer tests positive for a performance-enhancing drug.

In the event that a boxer has undergone testing in which the boxer provides two samples ("A" and "B") and the boxer's "A" and subsequent "B" samples test positive for a performance-enhancing drug or if his "A" sample tests positive and he waives his right to have the "B" sample tested then the boxer shall immediately be removed from the ratings.

A boxer whose "A" sample tested positive and is awaiting the results of his "B" sample will not be allowed to fight for a championship or rise in the ratings.

A boxer who is removed because of a positive test will have the opportunity to earn his way back into the ratings after any suspension period is completed.

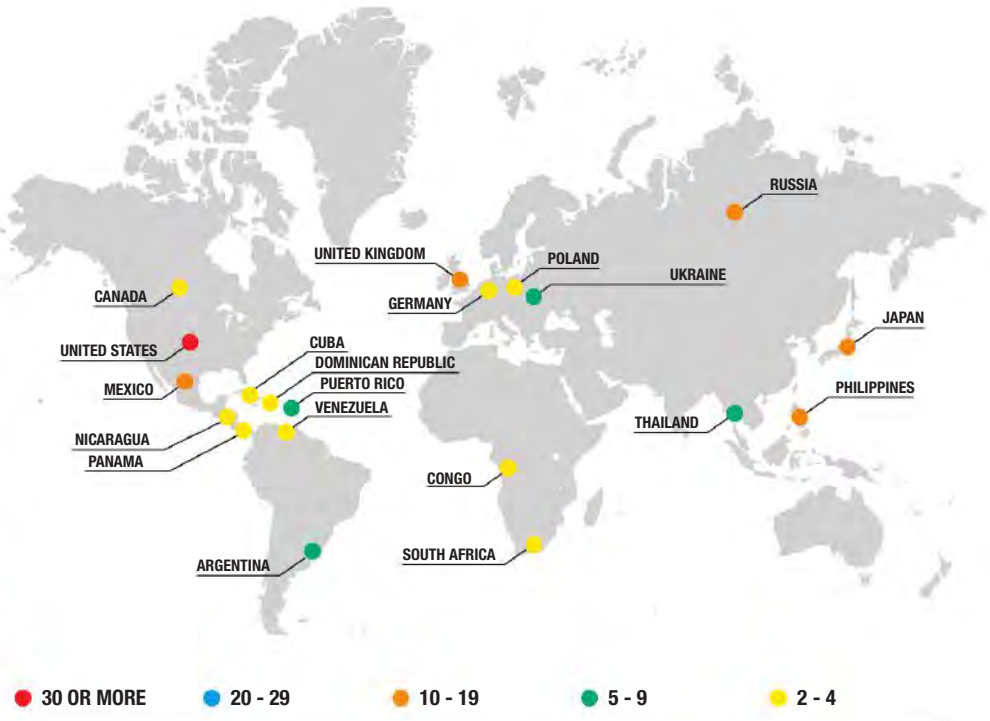
A boxer who is dropped also may be reinstated if the testing agency subsequently reverses its decision or a court of competent jurisdiction finds that the test result was invalid.

RATED FIGHTERS BY COUNTRY

UNITED STATES	32	▼1
UNITED KINGDOM	18	
MEXICO	17	
JAPAN	14	
PHILIPPINES	12	
RUSSIA	12	
THAILAND	8	
ARGENTINA	5	
PUERTO RICO	5	
UKRAINE	5	▼1
CANADA	4	
CUBA	4	
SOUTH AFRICA	4	
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	3	
GERMANY	3	
CONGO	2	
NICARAGUA	2	
PANAMA	2	
POLAND	2	
VENEZUELA	2	▲1
ARMENIA	1	
AUSTRALIA	1	
BULGARIA	1	
CAMEROON	1	
CHINA	1	
COLOMBIA	1	
COSTA RICA	1	
FRANCE	1	
GHANA	1	
IRELAND	1	
JAMAICA	1	
KAZAKHSTAN	1	
MALAWI	1	
MONTENEGRO	1	
PERU	1	
SWEDEN	1	
UGANDA	1	
UZBEKISTAN	1	

Countries out (from last month): *None*

Countries in: *None*



BIG VS. LITTLE

Three countries (the U.S., U.K. and Russia) dominate the larger weight classes while three more (Mexico, Japan and the Philippines) dominate the smaller divisions. Those six countries have 105 of the 174 fighters rated by THE RING, 60.3 percent. Here's how those groupings stack up head to head:

DIVISION	BIG	LITTLE
HEAVYWEIGHTS	6	0
CRUISERWEIGHTS	3	0
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS	3	0
SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	7	1
MIDDLEWEIGHTS	4	1
JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS	7	1
WELTERWEIGHTS	9	1
JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS	8	0
LIGHTWEIGHTS	3	1
JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS	1	4
FEATHERWEIGHTS	5	2
JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS	3	6
BANTAMWEIGHTS	2	3
JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS	0	4
FLYWEIGHTS	1	4
JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS	0	10
STRAWWEIGHTS	0	5
TOTAL	62	43

AMERICANS SHUT OUT

The United States continues to dominate the ratings with 32 fighters, 14 more than second-place United Kingdom. However, remarkably, not one American sits atop any of the 17 weight divisions (either champion or No. 1 in divisions with championship vacancies). Here are the top men in each weight class.

HEAVYWEIGHT – TYSON FURY, U.K.

CRUISERWEIGHT – GRIGORY DROZD, RUSSIA

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT – SERGEY KOVALEV, RUSSIA

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT – ARTHUR ABRAHAM, ARMENIA

MIDDLEWEIGHT – CANELO ALVAREZ, MEXICO

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT – ERISLANDY LARA, CUBA

WELTERWEIGHT – KELL BROOK, U.K.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT – VIKTOR POSTOL, UKRAINE

LIGHTWEIGHT – JORGE LINARES, VENEZUELA

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHT – TAKASHI UCHIYAMA, JAPAN

FEATHERWEIGHT – VASYL LOMACHENKO, UKRAINE

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT – GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX, CUBA

BANTAMWEIGHT – SHINSUKE YAMANAKA, JAPAN

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHT – NAOYA INOUE, JAPAN

FLYWEIGHT – ROMAN GONZALEZ, NICARAGUA

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHT – DONNIE NIETES, PHILIPPINES

STRAWWEIGHT – HEKKIE BUDLER, SOUTH AFRICA

FOCUS ON . . .

FEATHERWEIGHTS

A breakdown of THE RING Top 10 in one division each month, plus a list of fighters on the cusp of breaking through. This month: the 126-pounders.

Vasyl Lomachenko is recognized as one of the best fighters in the world after only six pro fights.

MOST WEEKS RATED: EVGENY GRADOVICH **154**

FEWEST WEEKS RATED: SATOSHI HOSONO **8**

OLDEST: SIMPIWE VETYEKA **35**

YOUNGEST: RONNY RIOS **26**

MOST FIGHTS: HOSONO **33**

FEWEST FIGHTS: VASYL LOMACHENKO **6**

HIGHEST WINNING PERCENTAGE: LEO SANTA CRUZ **96.9 PERCENT**

LOWEST WINNING PERCENTAGE: LOMACHENKO **83.3 PERCENT**

MOST KOS: JESUS CUELLAR **21**

FEWEST KOS: LOMACHENKO **3**

LONGEST CURRENT WINNING STREAK: SANTA CRUZ **30 FIGHTS**

ON THE POUND-FOR-POUND LIST: NONE

TITLEHOLDERS IN THE TOP 10: LEE SELBY **(IBF)**, SANTA CRUZ **(WBA)**, GARY RUSSELL JR. **(WBC)**, LOMACHENKO **(WBO)**

ON THE CUSP (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER): JOSEPH DIAZ, ANDRES GUTIERREZ, ERIC HUNTER, FERNANDO MONTIEL, OSCAR VALDEZ

OLD SCHOOL 8

THE RING staff members' current champions in the original eight weight classes.

Guillermo Rigondeaux

MICHAEL ROSENTHAL RING MAGAZINE EDITOR

HEAVYWEIGHT: TYSON FURY
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT: SERGEY KOVALEV
MIDDLEWEIGHT: GENNADY GOLOVKIN
WELTERWEIGHT: KELL BROOK
LIGHTWEIGHT: TAKASHI UCHIYAMA
FEATHERWEIGHT: GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX
BANTAMWEIGHT: SHINSUKE YAMANAKA
FLYWEIGHT: ROMAN GONZALEZ

DOUG FISCHER RINGTV.COM EDITOR

HEAVYWEIGHT: TYSON FURY
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT: SERGEY KOVALEV
MIDDLEWEIGHT: GENNADY GOLOVKIN
WELTERWEIGHT: KELL BROOK
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BRIAN HARTY RING MAGAZINE MANAGING EDITOR

HEAVYWEIGHT: TYSON FURY
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT: SERGEY KOVALEV
MIDDLEWEIGHT: GENNADY GOLOVKIN
WELTERWEIGHT: KELL BROOK
LIGHTWEIGHT: TAKASHI UCHIYAMA
FEATHERWEIGHT: GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX
BANTAMWEIGHT: NAOYA INOUE
FLYWEIGHT: ROMAN GONZALEZ

Note: *This is how the weights break down: Heavyweight includes cruiserweight, light heavyweight includes super middleweight, all divisions middleweight through flyweight include the "junior" versions, and flyweight also includes strawweight.*

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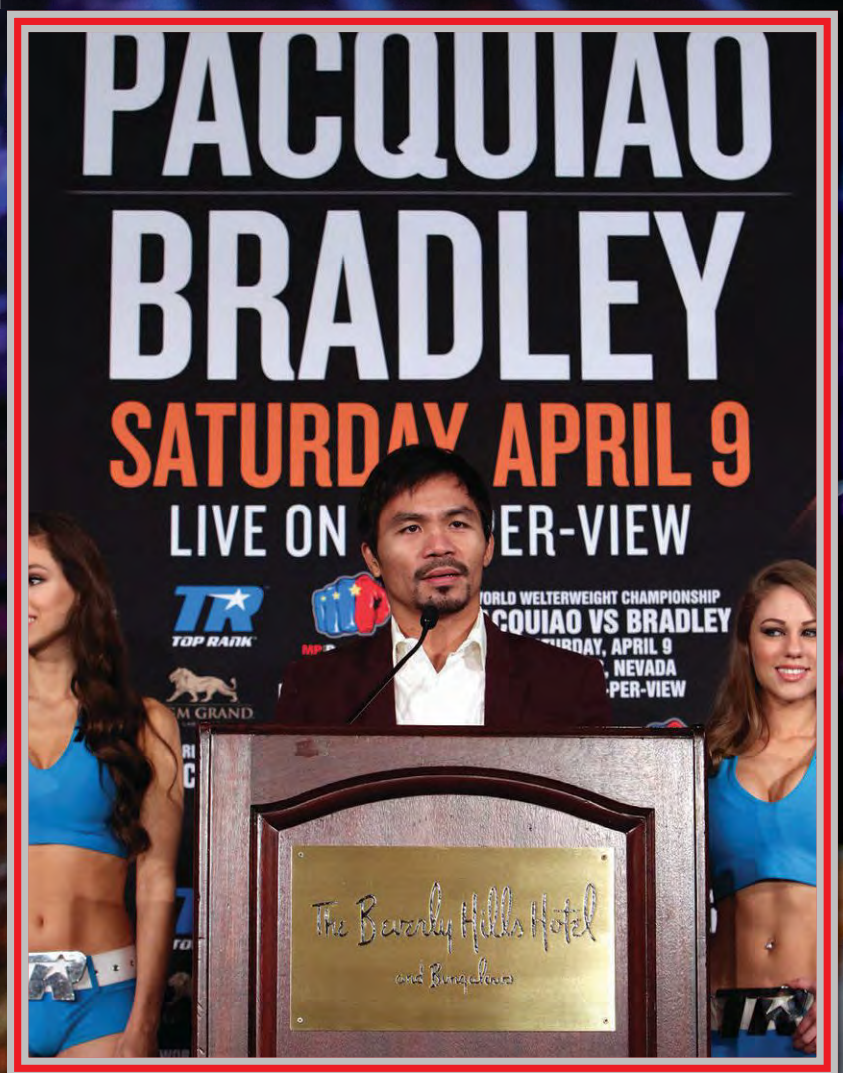
ONE HELL OF A RIDE

MANNY PACQUIAO SAYS THIS IS HIS FINAL FIGHT. IF IT IS, HE LEAVES A LEGACY THAT WILL BE HARD TO TOP.

By **Norm Frauenheim**



There's a lot of talk about Manny Pacquiao's legacy. It's a well-worn word these days, overdone and overused, yet applied ad nauseam to just about anybody who has fought their way into wealth and celebrity. Somehow, it just doesn't fit Pacquiao and maybe that's why he doesn't seem to mention it, or even make it a part of his public profile.

Legacy is a good advertising hook, hood ornament or fashion accessory for someone selling their own place in history. It's not as if Pacquiao hasn't seen how it's done. He's also had the opportunity, again and again, to shape the narrative on how he wants to be remembered. There are championships in eight weight classes and money unimaginable when he was a skinny kid fighting for a few Filipino pesos. »

Manny Pacquiao will close out his career (he says) against one of the top active fighters, Tim Bradley.

INSET: CHRISFARINA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES; AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES

MAYWEATHER
PACQUIAO
Jinkee
Jimuel
Michael
Princess
Queen

It's a poignant story that tells itself without much self-aggrandizement, acronyms or anger. Through more than two decades, he's been called Pacman, then Congressman. There have been inevitable scars. Controversy, too.

But he still wears the shy smile so evident in that long walk to the ring for dangerous dates against Erik Morales, Marco Antonio Barrera and Juan Manuel Marquez. Then, he looked like a kid on his way to the playground. He looked like Manny. Still does.

Even at a news conference in New York in mid-January for what might be his final bout against Timothy Bradley on April 9, there were no pretensions, no talk of legacy. There was just that familiar Pacquiao, a Manny of the People.

"Sad to say that after this, I'm going to retire and hang up my gloves and focus on another big responsibility in life, to help the people," the populist pugilist said at Madison Square Garden. "I entered boxing because I want to help my family, my mother. And now I end my boxing career in helping the Filipino people."

As he prepares to make what he says will be his last ring walk for a second rematch with Bradley at Las Vegas' MGM Grand, there's a parallel debate in the media and among fans about whether he'll change his mind and be drawn back within the ropes. Promoter Bob Arum and trainer Freddie Roach are skeptical about whether he's really walking away. Perhaps they're just hopeful he'll be back for more.

Money for him and them, they say, is still there. Why leave it on the table? He's 37. Maybe there's a fight or two left in him. Another bite at the golden apple in a rematch of his rich yet controversial loss to Floyd Mayweather Jr. in May will always be a temptation. A headache, too.

Pacquiao has never been shy about expressing his faith.

HARRY HOW/GETTY IMAGES

5 REASONS PACQUIAO IS GREAT

1. Won major championships in eight of 17 weight classes, which is remarkable even in an era of the title glut.
2. Won major titles at flyweight and junior middleweight, a span of 42 pounds in weight limits (112 to 154). Note: He started his career as a 105-pounder.
3. Compiled a record of 11-4-1 against fighters who are or will likely be in the International Boxing Hall of Fame.
4. Had one of the greatest two-year runs in history, beating in succession Marco Antonio Barrera, Juan Manuel Marquez, David Diaz, Oscar De La Hoya, Ricky Hatton and Miguel Cotto.
5. Fought at the highest level of the sport for almost 20 years in spite of a taxing, high punch-volume style.

But there's no finality to any boxer's retirement. There are only comeback rumors. They were fueled in New York when the media pressed Pacquiao with follow-up questions about how serious his retirement plans really were. He put them at 80 to 90 percent. Turns out, he's also a smart politician, who – like clever boxers – are hard to corner.

But does it really matter whether the third Bradley fight is a wrap? Probably not, at least not in how we think we'll remember Pacquiao. That thought process has been underway for a few years now, probably from the very moment he landed, face first, on the canvas from a right hand delivered by Marquez in December 2012.

In the public imagination, that stunning moment represents the beginning of the end to at least his boxing career. When he awoke from the knockout blow, the smile was still there. Pacquiao still had a lot to look forward to after a career that ranks second to Mayweather in terms of record and revenue.

According to Forbes, Pacquiao has earned at least $425 million, including endorsements, over his 65-fight career. Before the Mayweather bout, the magazine reported he generated $755 million from 13.6 million buys over 18 pay-per-view bouts. PPV revenue from a record 4.4 million buys for Pacquaio-Mayweather was reported to be more than $400 million, bringing Pacquiao's PPV totals to more than $1.1 billion in revenue from 18 million buys over 19 PPV fights.

He has spent a lot of his share on political campaigns, including a current one for a seat in the Filipino Senate.

Then there are his charity missions to help fellow citizens devastated by the Pacific island nation's repeated volcanic eruptions and typhoons. Pacquiao is said to spend money the way Mayweather brags about it. That, too, fuels talk about a comeback.

Arum recalls when Pacquiao helped the fishermen in his hometown, General Santos City.

"There's a big fishing fleet in Gen San," Arum said. "It took four hours to go out in the deep water and come back. Manny bought all the fishermen outboard motors. That eliminates four hours a day."

Eliminates some of Pacquiao's income, too.

But that generosity defines Pacquiao and the story of his spontaneous emergence from unknown street kid to one of the highest earning athletes in the world. Its beginnings are almost serendipitous. Pacquiao, a former flyweight champion with a 33-2 record and a fringe junior featherweight title, was in Los Angeles in 2001 for a vacation.

He went by Roach's Wild Card Boxing Club for a workout. Roach held the mitts for a Filipino with a name that the trainer couldn't spell then. He felt his power. Saw his hunger. Two months later, Roach was in the corner at the MGM Grand for Pacquiao's sixth-round stoppage of Lehlo Ledwaba.

He won the IBF's 122-pound title and a lot more in his American debut. He got people talking. Promotional people. Network people. Manny's people. They're still talking but now it's about where he's been and how he stands up against the all-time greats.

The search for historical parallels has been underway since Pacquiao's stunning eighth-round stoppage of Oscar De La Hoya in 2008 in the Filipino's first bout as a welterweight, a seventh weight class in which he would win a title by stopping Miguel Cotto in 2009. Historical comparisons are fantasy. They are an entertaining exercise, yet also exasperating. It's debate without a conclusion. The 1972 Miami Dolphins were unbeaten but could they have beaten the Carolina Panthers or Denver Broncos? Impossible to say.

For Pacquiao, the quixotic argument leads to Henry Armstrong, a Top 5 all-timer in virtually every ranking, including that of THE RING, which put him at second place in 2002. Like Pacquiao, Armstrong held multiple titles at multiple weights – feather,

light and welter. For a brief stretch in 1938, he held the world title in all three divisions.

Here's the key difference: In Armstrong's era there were eight weight classes. There were no junior and super categories. In the Pacquiao era, there are 17 weights, not to mention a proliferation of rival acronyms, each with a proliferation of interim (aren't all of them?), emeritus and other belts designed only to fetch a sanctioning fee. Pacquiao's eight titles include four juniors (feather, light, welter and middle).

Any fighter, however, can only be judged by what he did with what was there in his own time. On the percentage scale, Pacquiao compares favorably. Pacquiao won major titles in 47 percent of the weight classes in his era while Armstrong won titles in 37.5 percent of the divisions in his time.

We'll never know how many titles Armstrong might have won had he had a chance to shop around for the IBF, WBA, WBC and WBO versions. For now, the only certainty is that Pacquiao is in the argument, regardless of what happens during and after the third chapter in the trilogy with Bradley.

Also, Pacquiao's place in history will probably be dictated by weight. He still was a work in progress at junior lightweight. His loss to Erik Morales in the first fight of their trilogy is evidence of that. Once he added a right hand to his feared left, however, be became perhaps an all-time great at 140 and beyond.

Ricky Hatton probably wasn't as good as he was billed, although the Brit somehow managed to upset Kostya Tszyu in 2005. Nevertheless Pacquiao made Hatton look overrated in 2009 with a first-round knockout that lifted him up so high that his shoe bottoms were visible to anybody lucky enough to be seated in press row. Pacquiao might have been at the peak of his powers on that night in early May.

The power he displayed against Hatton only punctuated the debate about his historical place. He looked like an all-timer then and for a couple more years.

Before beating Joshua Clottey at Cowboys Stadium in Dallas nearly a year later in the first defense of a 147-pound title he took from Cotto, the question was put to late boxing historian Bert Sugar. Where does he rank?

"Probably the greatest left-hander of all time," Sugar told THE RING.

That's a list that includes Marvin Hagler, one of history's great middleweight champs and a candidate for any all-time list. Pernell Whitaker, one of history's great defensive tacticians, was a left-hander. So was Joe Calzaghe, a super middleweight and light heavyweight who retired unbeaten.

During the next decade, it's safe to say that Pacquiao's place in

JEOFFREY MAITEM/GETTY IMAGES

Pacquiao has drawn large crowds wherever he goes.

history will be debated, considered and re-considered from countless perspectives. It depends on how the game changes and, to a lesser extent, how he does against Bradley on April 9.

He has promised a knockout but his power left him as he climbed up in weight and especially in the wake of a bruising 154-pound fight against Antonio Margarito. He beat Margarito, leaving the tough Mexican with a horribly misshapen face and a dangerously damaged eye.

Unseen until long after the fight, however, was the lasting damage Pacquiao suffered in absorbing body punches throughout the middle rounds of the 2010 bout at Cowboys Stadium. Margarito took something from him, which has been exemplified by a knockout drought that is 10 fights long and dates back to 2009.

Within the ropes, he's not the same. But the charisma in that familiar smile remains undiminished, especially among Filipinos who identify with him in a way that is almost unprecedented for a sports icon.

His influence in the Philippines is often hard to appreciate and perhaps harder to explain in a place like the United States, where there's an ever-shifting mix of heroes and villains in a diversified, often divided country.

About a year ago, an American basketball player was kicked out of the Filipino pro league for mocking Pacquiao's hoop skills. It's an amusing anecdote, a snapshot of how important Pacquiao is to a country once known for Imelda Marcos' shoes. If those shoes had been in Pacquiao's wardrobe, they probably wouldn't have been there for long. He would have given them to anybody who needed a pair.

More serious and illustrative, perhaps, is what happens in the Philippines when Pacquiao is fighting in Las Vegas. Before his May 2 loss to Mayweather, the national electric company, Palawan, urged energy conversation. In a tweet, it asked customers "to turn off major appliances to help prevent outages so people can watch."

There also was a cessation of hostilities on the southern islands where Muslim rebels have been fighting the Filipino military. Agence France-Press reported that Moro Islamic Liberation Front and Filipino forces declared a truce so each side could watch separate telecasts of Pacquiao-Mayweather in the southern province of Maguindanao.

Pacquiao lost to Mayweather. But he won some peace where there had been war. For 12 rounds, the warring sides were Manny's People. Sounds like a real legacy.

PERFECT PARTNERSHIP

TIM BRADLEY AND TEDDY ATLAS ARE HELPING EACH OTHER ANSWER THEIR CALLINGS

By **Ron Borges**

Tim Bradley (left) turned to trainer Teddy Atlas when he felt he needed a change.

After his first trial workout with Teddy Atlas ended, Tim Bradley came to a curious conclusion. It was nothing like what the former two-division titleholder had expected so now the question was what to do.

At the time, Bradley was 32-1-1 and on a two-fight winning streak since losing a rematch by decision to Manny Pacquiao. He was again WBO welterweight champion but this latest title came not with glory but rather a sense of unease suddenly amplified by Atlas' questions. They were questions to which Bradley had no answers.

"It all started between us from an interview after the Jessie Vargas fight," Bradley said while recalling how he came to convince Atlas to come out of retirement to train him. Atlas had walked away from that aspect of boxing three years earlier, wearied by the disappointment and betrayal so common in the business of boxing.

"I'd never been interviewed by Teddy Atlas but I'd always watched him on ESPN (where Atlas has long been the analyst of Friday Night Fights and now their more high-profile series featuring Al Haymon's Premier Boxing Champions). "I was excited to do it. When we were about to get off the phone he said, 'Do you know why you got hit with that right hand?'

"I said, 'Yeah. I was tired and he dropped in front of me and I tried to throw an uppercut.' He said, 'Yeah, but what did you do wrong

STEVE MARCUS/GETTY IMAGES; INSET: KEVORK DJANSEZIAN/GETTY IMAGES

mechanically?' He asked me, 'What do you do when a guy drops down in front of you? You drop down with him. You didn't.' Then he told me the rounds to go look at. He said, 'You thought he was going into your pocket but he wasn't. He was going for your head. He set you up.'

"I went and looked and he was right. I told my wife (Monica, who also manages Bradley) that night for a guy who's not my trainer to have that kind of depth of knowledge about me, I wanted him to train me."

Bradley had been trained for years by Joel Diaz but like many long-running unions in boxing it had run its course. In Bradley's mind he was growing stale and felt a sense of contentment had drifted in over his crew like night fog over the ocean, blinding them to what he'd begun to feel.

"I went to him like a man," Bradley said of a meeting with Diaz that did not end well. "I felt I was declining. I'm supposed to be going up, not down. Joel had so many other guys he was working with now. We were supposed to be getting ready for Pacquiao and he had to leave to go with a four-round fighter. When we're getting ready for Pacquiao? I understood he was trying to grow his business but what are we doing?

"Joel did a great job with me. He built me. I give Joel Diaz a lot of credit. I had skills. I was a top amateur. He made me a better fighter. We won world titles together. He taught me all he knew. I accomplished a lot with those things but it had just become a monotonous routine. Habits had been created. We were so comfortable and had so much success I think we got complacent and it was no longer good. I was getting hit a lot more.

"Was I going to correct those mistakes or just go back and do the same things again? Unanimous decisions were becoming split decisions. You've got to have a certain amount of respect for what you're doing. You lose that and problems

start to develop."

Having decided change was necessary, Bradley began to ponder where to turn. Unexpectedly, he turned to a guy asking him questions because, well, it seemed like the guy had the answers.

"I told my wife to get his number and ask him to train me," Bradley said of Atlas. "He said no. He said he wasn't doing that any more. He told me about the Russian (heavyweight Alexander Povetkin, whom Atlas turned into a contender and then walked away when Povetkin refused to abide by the training contract between them). He ranted about that a little bit.

"I told him, 'I'm not that guy, coach. Come and see the way I live. I respect my family. I respect the sport of boxing. Don't let a few guys take away what you're on the planet to do.'"

Atlas spoke to his wife, who was opposed to a return to the side of boxing that had so often left her husband disappointed despite having had extensive success with fighters like Michael Moorer, Mike Tyson, Simon Brown, Povetkin and a string of others. But his two children argued Bradley's point.

They reminded him he was a teacher first and that opportunity does not keep coming to someone who too often spurns its advances. Slowly Atlas was convinced. Not to train Bradley but to go to Palm Springs, California, where Bradley lives, and see who he was.

"I saw his enthusiasm and his need," Atlas said of his first encounter with Bradley. "We'd just finished watching film and seen him getting hit with right hands. I came prepared with eight pages of notes. 'Go to 53 seconds of the sixth round.' I had it down cold. This is what you did and this is what it led to and why. He was surprised by that."

Bradley (right) seems to be in a good frame of mind ahead of his third fight with Manny Pacquiao.

KENA BETANCUR/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

HALL CREDENTIALS?

Tim Bradley suggested that people would look back at his career and realize he has Hall of Fame credentials. He might be right. Bradley has fought 12 times against former or current world titleholders. In those fights, he's 10-1 (with one no-contest).

W	UD	**Miguel Vazquez** (July 27, 2007)
W	SD	**Junior Witter** (May 10, 2008)
W	UD	**Kendall Holt** (April 4, 2009)
NC		**Nate Campbell** (Aug. 2, 2009)
W	UD	**Lamont Peterson** (Dec. 12, 2009)
W	UD	**Devon Alexander** (Jan. 29, 2011)
W	TKO 8	**Joel Casamayor** (Nov. 12, 2011)
W	SD	**Manny Pacquiao** (June 9, 2012)
W	UD	**Ruslan Provodnikov** (March 16, 2013)
W	SD	**Juan Manuel Marquez** (Oct. 12, 2013)
L	UD	**Manny Pacquiao** (April 12, 2014)
W	TKO 9	**Brandon Rios** (Nov. 7, 2015)

Note: Bradley also outpointed Jessie Vargas, who held what the WBA calls its "regular" title. THE RING doesn't recognize that belt when the WBA simultaneously has a "super" titleholder.

That's not all Bradley was surprised by, however.

Upon his arrival, Atlas insisted Bradley stop at a shop so he could bring flowers to Bradley's wife to go along with some small gifts he'd brought for his children. Bradley had never heard of such a thing.

After greeting Monica, Atlas didn't launch into a boxing discussion or a contract negotiation. Rather, he asked to hold Bradley's young son, who smiled at this stranger in a way that made Bradley feel "like this is meant to be."

Soon, however, it was time to work and Atlas was prepared. After six hours of film study where Atlas kept pointing out specific mistakes at precise moments in various fight tapes, they headed off for their first gym workout … and for what Atlas thought might be their last.

"I liked Tim but I still wasn't going to do it," Atlas said.

What happened there, however, was a revelation for Tim Bradley.

"He put one of the mitts on the ground and had me go around it for about 40 rounds," Bradley recalled with a laugh. "I was thinking, 'What the hell are we doing?' Then he throws a jab and smacks me in the face. I looked at him and he said, 'Are you in control or am I in control?' He kept showing me mistake after mistake I'd make when he'd do certain things. I was not only getting beaten down physically, I was getting beat down mentally. By the end, I felt like I didn't know anything about boxing.

"He asked for my whole training schedule. I told him I ran five days. He said, 'Cut a day. I don't know if I'm going to train you but I'm going to help you.' He asked me why I sparred Monday, Wednesday and Friday. I didn't know. He said it'll be Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. He started making all these changes but he wouldn't commit. Before he left I told him I had a lot left in the tank. Then he went home and I didn't know if I had a trainer."

After more soul searching and some doubts, Atlas finally agreed and told Bradley why. It had nothing to do with boxing.

"I'm doing this not for the fighter you are or for the money," Atlas said. "It's for the man I think you are. One fight. Then we'll see."

Bradley agreed and Atlas said he'd assess things after a scheduled match with Brandon Rios. Then they went to work, a retired teacher back in his classroom with a willing student.

"I felt I could help him," Atlas said. "Even though he'd had all this success I had no doubt I could make him better. I started to think it would be a shame not to teach any more if you still have that ability in you.

"I'm not going to lie to you. You help yourself and your family too doing this. There's no doubt about that. But if you can also make someone better there's something powerful in that."

The first lesson came like a line from the Oscar-winning film "The Graduate," only in reverse. Plastics, Atlas told Bradley, were not the key to his future.

"When he said we weren't using plastics (to burn off excess weight that Bradley regularly collected between fights), my heart dropped!" Bradley said. "That's how I always did it. I'd come in at 185 and then get down. He said we're going to do it right. He told me he didn't think I'd been 100 percent for a fight for a long time.

"I was nervous about it but I was a student. I was ready to absorb things. I had to trust him. He told me if we worked together again, I better be 160 for camp. He said when you come in heavy it makes an eight-week camp a 14-week camp and that wears on a fighter.

"I knew I overindulged between fights. I'm a family guy. I always ate right but I liked to eat. I didn't have other vices but I ballooned up. I felt if I lost one day it would be because of weight problems. He said I didn't have a weight problem. He said I had a discipline problem. He kept saying, 'It's about doing everything right

every day.'"

As they worked the weight came off and when Bradley stepped in against Rios, the former WBA lightweight champion, on Nov. 17, 2015, he fought as he hadn't in years.

He was elusive, difficult to hit and made Rios pay for the many mistakes he made. When Rios tried to lure him into engagements Bradley once welcomed, Atlas firmly reminded him he didn't get paid to get hit. He got paid to hit the other guy.

In the end, Bradley dropped Rios in the ninth round with a crushing body shot and then forced him to take a knee after a barrage of punches before referee Tony Weeks stopped the fight. It is the only time in his career Rios failed to go the distance.

Although Bradley had looked the most dominating he had since before he upset Pacquiao by controversial split decision 3½ years earlier, the result was minimized by his critics. The same people who said he didn't deserve the close decision he got in the first Pacquiao fight now argued Rios was a shot fighter. Bradley's reaction to the firestorm surrounding the first Pacquiao fight was far different from the way he handled criticism of his most recent victory.

Acceptance of harsh realities, Atlas had taught him, is the price of freedom from their consequences. That lesson is why Bradley has been able to ignore what has been said not only about how he looked in his first fight with Atlas as his mentor but also in expectation of what will be said if they defeat Pacquiao together in the rubber match on April 9.

"I've beaten 13 world champions and been criticized all my career," Bradley said. "When I beat Pacquiao I got no credit. The last guy had never been stopped. I made him surrender and I hear 'Brandon wasn't ready.' It seems people always degrade my performance or my opponent. It comes with the territory I guess. Maybe it's because I'm a smooth boxer and not knocking guys out like Triple-G (middleweight champion Gennady Golovkin).

"So be it. At the end of Bradley, when I go away, I know I won't be missed but 10 years later they'll go through the list of who I fought and they'll say, 'Wow. He belongs in the Hall of Fame.' I'm cool with that," he said.

Bradley is also cool with Atlas' decision to train him for his third fight with Pacquiao, a decision Atlas made before Pacquiao decided on Bradley. What he'd seen during his eight weeks in Palm Springs, it turned out, was what every teacher searches for.

Atlas had found a student eager to learn and willing to accept the harsh lessons an honest professor of pugilism must sometimes deliver. Atlas is many things, including blunt. He is a believer in the power of the mind's ability to conquer all but only if that mind fully understands what it is facing and how it can become a conspirator in a fighter's demise if he's not open to change and firmly in control of doubt and reality.

Bradley's first fight with Atlas – against Brandon Rios – went well: ninth-round TKO.

STEVE MARCUS/GETTY IMAGES

"In the gym he was honest about it," Atlas said. "When he saw the mistakes he was making his reaction wasn't to fight it. His thought was, 'I better correct these things.' What I learned from Cus (D'Amato, the old boxing guru who taught Atlas the way Yoda taught Luke Skywalker) was look at what he's doing wrong and correct it. Most guys wait until after the guy pays the price for it.

"Cus used to say just because his opponent wasn't good enough to capitalize, it was still wrong. Somebody will be good enough so don't wait until then. I always took that approach."

That's all well and good but not every successful fighter wants to explore his flaws too deeply and not

every trainer wants to point them out. The latter is because, in many cases, it can get you fired.

Atlas has never feared that and wasn't about to start now. He would give his lessons and the student would learn or they would part company. He would leave long before anyone would fire him if the lessons were not followed. He was a teacher, you see, not a masochist.

"What does a teacher want?" Atlas said. "Someone who's excited and wants to learn. Forget the fact you're getting paid for it. That's already there. We know that. At this stage of my life, there had to be another reason to do it. There was a person here who wanted to be helped and there was an opportunity to do that.

"I've been blessed with the ability to do this and I wasn't doing it. A part of me had to admit I'd been missing that. Tim gave me an opportunity."

Bradley looks at Atlas the same way. He sees him as an opportunity to perfect a profession he's worked at for 25 years. More importantly, he accepted that despite all his success something new was needed and a sometimes harsh voice was it.

"Teddy showed me why I didn't have to take all those punches," Bradley said. "I believe in his knowledge. Once I did it was easy to change my thought process. I'd been trying to be more aggressive, to be more entertaining. I got a lot of credit against (Ruslan) Provodnikov (whom he beat in a surprising slugfest in which he was twice badly hurt following the first Pacquiao fight) for not caring about taking punishment. Teddy showed me I don't have to do that.

"He made me realize there's laws and principles in boxing I should have known a long time ago. My eyes are open now. Now I see what's there. I see more of my opponents' mistakes and what will happen if I make the same ones. I see what's available now."

One thing that's available is a third shot at Pacquiao. This was a fight Bradley was never sure would happen and when it was announced there were some who criticized Pacquiao's choice, arguing he should have tried to lure Floyd Mayweather Jr. into a rematch or taken on one of the young lions like Keith Thurman or Terence Crawford.

Pacquiao disagreed. His choice was Bradley. No one could be feeling better about it than Bradley himself.

"My advantage is my new trainer," Bradley said. "Teddy Atlas coming up with new strategies and tightening up my technique where I had some leakage. I know better now what to do and what to be in the ring. Teddy's taught me I shouldn't throw certain punches from certain positions. I never had those tools until Teddy came along. He's taught me where to be and where not to be, where it's safe to punch from and where it's not.

"He never lets you relax. If you make a mistake in sparring, he lets you know. If he sees a mistake, even a small one, he shows it to you and explains the consequences even if the guy you're fighting didn't make you pay for them. I felt so much more in control against Rios than I had in a while.

"To me, Teddy Atlas is the best trainer in the business. I've had five or six coaches. I never met a better trainer or a better man than Teddy Atlas."

Atlas made clear to Bradley during a mini-camp prior to the press tour announcing the fight that, "this is his moment. He's made money. He's set up his family. So this fight is no longer about money. This fight is about his legacy. He has to see what Pacquiao is, not what you think he is or imagine he is. See it on film and apply it every day in training and on the night of the fight.

"See what he is. And what he isn't. Not what the legend is. Not what's said about him. See what he is. That's what (Floyd) Mayweather did. That's what my fighter has to see. At this level, a lot of it is mental. You have to see what you're really facing, not what you've been told. There's a guy in there fighting in certain spots. Don't just see what he's doing. See what he's not doing.

"For us to be successful, and I believe we will be, we've got to deal with what is, not what isn't … and then you got to go hit him."

That, of course, is the great difficulty and the great danger. The Teacher can teach only so much. At some point it is the student who must execute. He is the one who must pass the test, although Atlas believes if he is taught well enough he will, because he must.

"In order to win, we have to deal with his physical talent," Atlas said. "The first five, six rounds, Pacquiao is explosive. He's fast. He can punch. But even with all that talent there are still mistakes. There's always mistakes. You have to take his strengths out of play.

"I told Tim don't think he's going to be distracted because he says it's his last fight. He's had distractions for years. That's never influenced him. It's never ever showed itself and it won't this time. I'm like everyone else. If you'll give me help I'll take it. Bring it in a shopping bag. But Manny Pacquiao isn't going to help us win. We have to help ourselves by being ready. And Tim will be."

As Bradley prepared in Palm Springs for the camp to come, Atlas sat 3,000 miles away wondering. Would his fighter be where he should be or would he forget the first lesson?

Bradley didn't.

"I'm 163 with two weeks to go before camp opens," he said. "Teddy wants me at 160. No plastics!

"I don't know why Pacquiao picked me but I'm glad he did. One reason may be he knows me. Another is it makes financial sense with me being known and coming off a fight where I stopped a guy he couldn't. And we're 1-1."

Bradley paused for a moment before adding one final thought.

"We're going to surprise a lot of people on April 9," he said.

A lot of people but not the student. Or his teacher.

A PLEASANT SURPRISE

THE ALVAREZ VS. KHAN MATCHUP IS APPEALING ON A NUMBER OF LEVELS

By **Michael Rosenthal**

KHAN: AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES; ALVAREZ: ISAAC BREKKEN/GETTY IMAGES

Is Canelo Alvarez (above) too strong for Amir Khan? Is Khan (below) too fast for Alvarez?

My immediate reaction when I heard that Canelo Alvarez would fight Amir Khan on May 7 was twofold: concern for Khan and fascination. I think most people had similar feelings.

The concern for Khan comes from a difference in size. Alvarez, who will be defending his RING and WBC middleweight championship at a catchweight of 155 pounds, is seen as a large junior middleweight while Khan is a welterweight with a suspect chin.

One could argue that's a formula for a predictable, short fight.

Thus, it's no surprise that some of the most cynical among boxing fans blasted the pairing as a mismatch and were brutally critical of Alvarez, who was compared to a woman's body part by more than one angry observer.

Those people couldn't be more wrong regardless of what happens in the fight. The matchup makes perfect sense.

Alvarez could not be expected to face a high-risk opponent with a megafight against Gennady Golovkin looming for later this year. The names being bandied about were middleweights Gabriel Rosado and Willie Monroe Jr., solid fighters and legitimate 160-pounders who would've generated no buzz.

Is there anyone out there who would've rather seen Alvarez-Rosado or Alvarez-Monroe? Of course not. Alvarez-Khan is interesting.

And it might be the best of the three aforementioned fights. Almost everyone believes Alvarez will beat Khan for the reasons stated above. That includes Freddie Roach, who trained Khan and has watched Alvarez fight from the opposite corner.

"Canelo's way too big and way too strong for Khan, I think. Khan has a lot of balls taking that fight," Roach said.

Roach also mentioned the attributes that give Khan a chance to win: "Khan's a good boxer with speed." If he can protect his chin, it's not

difficult to imagine his well-honed ability and quickness – in both his hands and feet – giving Alvarez problems.

I think that's part of the fascination with this fight. Most people fear for Khan but also are well aware of his strengths, which have made him an elite fighter.

And is the size disparity really so outrageous? Alvarez is a beefy guy but still a natural junior middleweight. The catchweight is 155 – not 154 – primarily so he can defend his middleweight titles. Khan has fought three times at 147 pounds, making him a full-fledged welterweight.

That means Khan's essentially moving up one weight class, which fighters often do without causing a ripple. I think this one seems out of the ordinary in good part because of Khan's chin.

That said, Alvarez is without question the bigger, stronger man, which brings us back to Roach's comment about Khan's courage: His willingness to step into this cauldron is another appealing aspect of the matchup. Fans love gumption.

"He's a fighter," promoter Oscar De La Hoya said of Khan. "He's a fighter who does not shy away from any challenge. I've always praised Amir Khan for his ability to face any fighter out there. (Floyd) Mayweather didn't want to face him for various reasons. (Manny) Pacquiao didn't want to face him for those same reasons.

"… (Now) he's stepping up and facing Canelo. He deserves a major fight."

Khan isn't stupid, though. He knows this is a risk, a sensible risk. He could've taken a safer (albeit also dangerous) fight against countryman Kell Brook for the IBF welterweight title in what would be a major event in the United Kingdom. Khan reportedly was offered $10 million for that fight.

Instead, he's going after a bigger international fish in Alvarez for less money. If he wins, Khan will become the toast of the boxing world and a ridiculously wealthy man going forward. That sort of opportunity doesn't come along often. If he loses, he can say, "I gave it a shot but he was too big for me," and presumably still

AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES

Khan has been applauded for the courage he showed by taking this fight.

Alvarez and Co. used creativity when they selected Khan as his opponent.

get the Brook fight. Seems reasonable.

Here's the twofold catch for him: If he suffers a brutal knockout, there's less incentive for Brook to fight him and no one knows how such an outcome will affect Khan physically going forward. He might never be the same again.

"If I were advising him, I'd advise him not to take this fight," Roach said.

Another source of fascination among fans seems to have been the announcement of the fight by De La Hoya. No one saw this coming, which fueled the pulsating buzz after the news went public.

"In all the years I've been in boxing I have never been able to keep a secret like this one," De La Hoya told ESPN.com.

The main reason it took everyone by surprise is that no one put Khan's name out there as a possible opponent for Alvarez, or so it seemed. One reason for that might've been Khan's adviser, Al Haymon, who isn't in the habit of doing business with Golden Boy, Alvarez's promoter.

One more reaction to the announcement: How is this even possible?

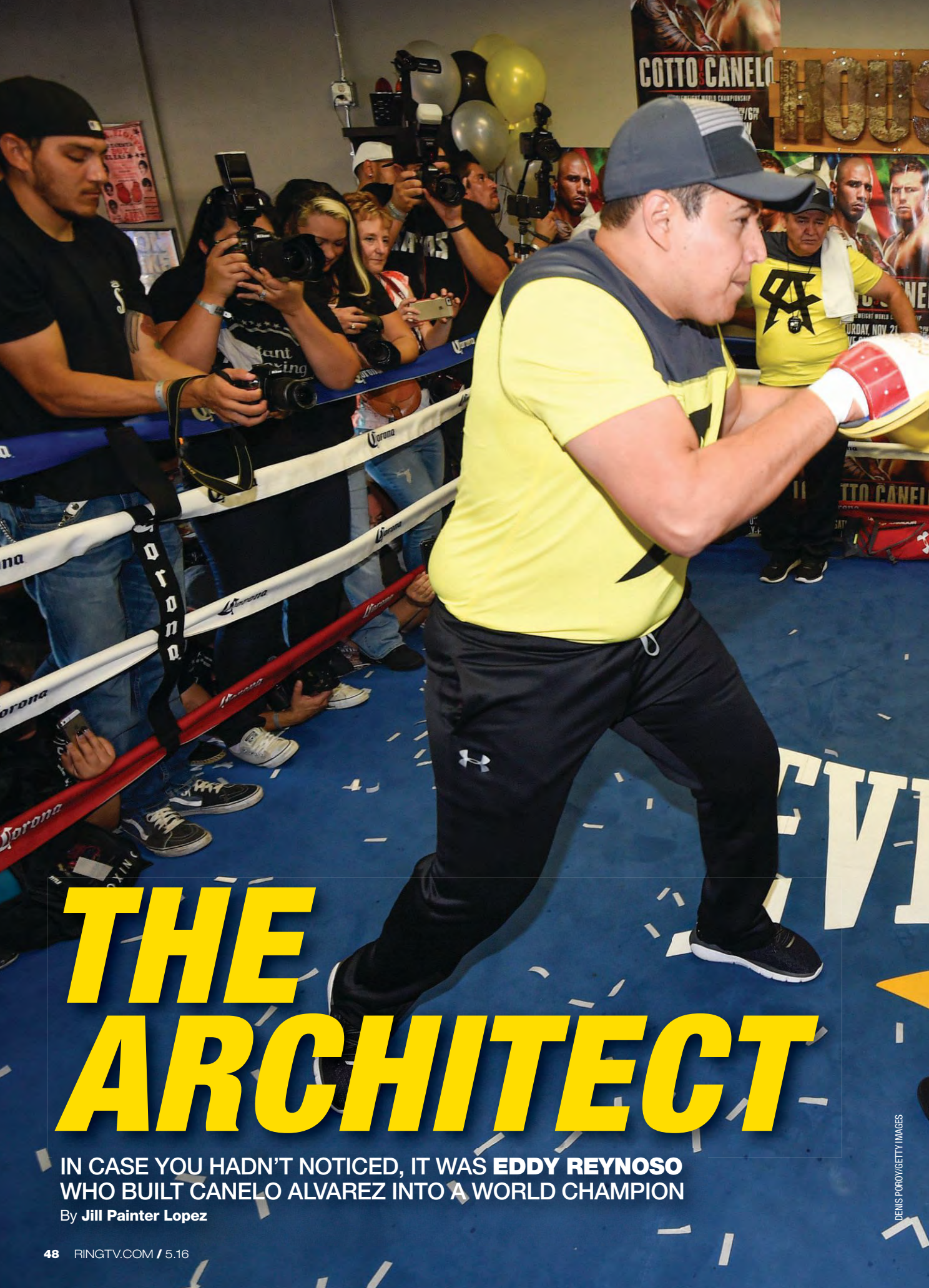
Lance Pugmire of the Los Angeles Times had an interesting theory. Haymon has been sued by Golden Boy and Top Rank, Inc., in part, they contend, because he is trying to monopolize the sport and functioning as both a manager and promoter against federal law.

Haymon can now point to the Alvarez-Khan fight and say, "Look, I'm playing fairly."

And, finally, even the venue is interesting. The fight will take place at the glitzy new T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, adding yet another level of appeal to a fight that already is a can't-miss event.

I guess everyone wins. The fans get an intriguing fight they never expected. Alvarez gets a compelling dance partner en route to Golovkin. Khan gets the megafight he has so long coveted. Golden Boy rather brilliantly pulled a lucrative fight out of thin air. And even Al Haymon comes out looking good.

Sometimes boxing provides pleasant surprises. RING



THE ARCHITECT

IN CASE YOU HADN'T NOTICED, IT WAS **EDDY REYNOSO** WHO BUILT CANELO ALVAREZ INTO A WORLD CHAMPION

By **Jill Painter Lopez**

DENIS PORO/GETTY IMAGES

Eddy Reynoso (left) has been at Canelo Alvarez's side since the beginning.

Eddy Reynoso is living in an obsessed boxing fan's fantasy land in Guadalajara, Mexico.

In the house the Mexican trainer shares with his wife and daughter, he has a room with thousands of tapes of boxing matches involving the likes of Sugar Ray Robinson and Marvin Hagler. He has as many as 40 fights for some boxers.

He has figurines and gloves, too, and even a nearly complete collection of this magazine, THE RING, starting from its inception in 1922.

One could get lost in that room for weeks, poring over the sea of boxing material, which Reynoso does on weekends when he's not in training camp with his prized fighter, Saul "Canelo" Alvarez. Reynoso's favorite fights to watch are those of the late Mexican boxer Gilberto Roman and the late American Willie Pep, a two-time featherweight champion. He has a portrait of Pep from 1954.

"It's very important to know history because that's what we do," Reynoso said through a translator. "That's our job. Sometimes, somebody asks about boxing, and they don't know much. They don't know where champions come from. Or who was the first Mexican champion? Which champion had more defenses? You have to know about boxing because we live this.

"Besides that, I really like it. I just bought a boxing book from 1818 in England. I like to keep researching. That's my job and I like it."

Reynoso will turn 40 this November and his blossoming career can be likened to a video stashed in that special room, a hidden treasure only now being dusted off and played for all to see. The longtime trainer of Alvarez is finally earning recognition for helping to mold a 13-year-old with raw talent into a championship boxer.

It wasn't until Alvarez beat Miguel Cotto to win the RING and WBC middleweight championships last November in Las Vegas that Reynoso's

star began to cast a glow outside Alvarez's camp.

"Eddy is the type of person who always works so hard and tries to get the best out of us, and perhaps that's the reason he's so focused on his duties and doesn't pay attention to the recognition he deserves," Alvarez said in a translated email. "I believe he thinks this should be automatic for the things he accomplished with other fighters and especially with me. He taught me everything because I didn't even know how to throw a jab at the beginning."

Alvarez met Reynoso when he went to the gym with one of his professional boxing brothers, Rigoberto. Reynoso and his father, Chepo, were training boxers in Guadalajara and began tutoring Alvarez.

"I recall that day very well," Reynoso said. "He was very young. He was a kid. In that moment, (Oscar) 'Chololo' Larios was the world champion. They asked Canelo who he wanted to be like and he said Chololo Larios. And Chololo was there, and he said, 'He's going to be better than me.'

"Maybe it sounded like something impossible, but to be honest, it became reality. That dream from that little kid was step-by-step to getting where he's at now."

Reynoso was just 27 at the time he and his father started working with Alvarez but he was always Canelo's main trainer. It's been 12 years and the pair has been a successful 1-2 punch, as Alvarez is now 46-1-1 (32 knockouts) and a two-division world titleholder. His lone loss was to Floyd Mayweather Jr.

"We have a great relationship," Alvarez said. "We are like family. (Working with) Eddy and Chepo has been a great experience. They've taught me discipline, hard work, respect and loyalty."

Loyalty is a two-way street. Reynoso, unlike many trainers, has chosen to work almost exclusively with Alvarez. He also guided Jose Argumedo to a strawweight title in December.

Veteran trainer Robert Garcia believes the near exclusivity has contributed to Reynoso not receiving the recognition of some of his peers. This year, Reynoso was nominated for Trainer of the Year by the Boxing Writers Association of America.

"I'm going to be honest and tell you why I feel this is happening. Those awards are so much about politics, and that's why," Garcia said. "There's been so many great Mexican trainers in the past with great champions and there hasn't been one single Mexican ever to win that award. I was the first Mexican-American (in 2012). The year before and the year after I felt I should've gotten it. There's so many politics.

"He's also only shown his work with Canelo. They did so good the last fight they had to mention him. It's between him and Abel Sanchez. I'd choose either one. It's only Canelo he works with and (some people) want to see more wins with different fighters. That's probably why he hasn't gotten that recognition."

Reynoso seems to be OK with that.

"I'm full-time with Canelo," he said. "He's been very loyal to me. I will go to the moon if he asks."

The Reynosos and Alvarez go to San Diego for training camp and all stay in the same house. After training is finished each day, Chepo cooks for everyone. The elder Reynoso was an amateur boxer but ultimately found his niche in training. He began to work at the Julian Magdaleno Gym and, together with Eddy, trained former featherweight titleholder Alejandro Gonzalez. The rest is history.

Chepo Reynoso taught his son the ropes.

"Since I was 6, my dad took me to a boxing gym in Guadalajara, where all the legends from (the state of) Jalisco came from," the younger Reynoso said. "That was La Arena Coliseo. I was working out there one year. When I was 11, my dad took me to a different gym, where I started to take the sport more seriously as an amateur boxer.

"My dad gave me the idea to be serious in boxing. More important, to be honest. He's a very honest person. … And, of course, always discipline and responsibility in any field. And never be late to a workout."

Reynoso has been learning English by listening to the broadcasters while he watches fights and reading boxing

Eddy Reynoso (right) learned the ropes from his father, Chepo Reynoso (left).

'(Eddy Reynoso) taught me everything because I didn't even know how to throw a jab at the beginning.'

– Canelo Alvarez

articles and has started taking English classes. He wants to become fluent. He understands about 80 percent of what he reads in English, he said.

However, Reynoso conducts interviews and press conferences in Spanish. That might be another reason he's not as mainstream as some trainers in the U.S. He also isn't as outspoken as some of his counterparts, such as Freddie Roach or Floyd Mayweather Sr.

That's by design.

"My philosophy is that your work speaks for itself," Reynoso said. "A lot of people in this industry, they sell (smoke and) mirrors. They want to be in highlights. They don't go to the gym but you see them on TV. The proof of talent is when you come with a boxer from the beginning, when the boxer is going four rounds and becomes a champion."

Reynoso still isn't a household name, like Roach, but Alvarez's victory over the Roach-trained Cotto was a defining moment in the trainer's career.

"That's one of the fights that's more beautiful and important we've been able to win," Reynoso said. "First, we beat a great boxer like Miguel Cotto. We won the second world championship. There was a lot of criticism of the way we were working with Saul, that he didn't have a trainer with experience. They really didn't give us a chance until we won with good boxing, technique and class.

"It really left me very satisfied and that's something I'll never forget because it was a nice moment."

Reynoso traveled with Alvarez nine of the 12 months last year, which might've been a problem if his wife didn't understand the business. He's married to Maria Fabiola Torres Escoto, the daughter of former world champion Efren "Alacran" Torres. The Reynosos have a daughter, Lea Fernanda, and are expecting their second child, a daughter, who is due in May.

That's around the same time as Canelo's next fight, against Amir Khan for the middleweight championship on May 7 in Las Vegas.

Reynoso might have some hardware of his own to add to his collector's room not long after that, if he is honored by the BWAA. Not that he's worried about it. His biggest wish is that those who don't know much about him would learn this: "I love boxing. I'm a passionate guy about boxing who knows history."

The proof is in that collector's room and in Alvarez's career. RING

Lennox Lewis was a key figure in two strong decades of boxing in the U.K.

THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

U.K. BOXING IS ENJOYING A RENAISSANCE. BUT HOW DOES THE CURRENT ERA STACK UP WITH ITS PREDECESSORS? THE RING RANKS THE PAST SIX DECADES.

By **Tom Gray**

There are currently 11 active world champions from the U.K., a number which far exceeds any other era in British boxing history. The heavyweight champion of the world, Tyson Fury, leads the way and is backed up by myriad world-class operators from bantamweight upward.

Kell Brook, Anthony Crolla, James DeGale, Terry Flanagan, Carl Frampton, Lee Haskins, Scott Quigg, Lee Selby, Billy Joe Saunders and Liam Smith are all recognized as legitimate world titleholders. Jamie McDonnell, a former IBF bantamweight champ, holds a secondary WBA belt not recognized by THE RING.

The statistics are impressive. And there's more. Carl Froch, who retired in July of last year as a three-time super middleweight titleholder, set a post-war attendance record – 80,000 at Wembley Stadium – in his rematch win over George Groves. Scott Quigg and Carl Frampton will square off in a colossal junior featherweight unification bout on Feb. 27 and Amir Khan is scheduled to face Canelo Alvarez on May 7 in one of the most lucrative matchups in the sport.

So is this the greatest era in British boxing history?

Not necessarily. For one thing, there are more "champions" today than in the past – potentially 68, the product of 17 weight classes among four major governing bodies. And that doesn't count THE RING, which has its own champions.

That leads to this question: How many British fighters from the 1960s or 1970s would have been world titleholders in today's game? Probably quite a few.

In this special feature, compiled by contributor Tom Gray of Scotland, THE RING takes all that into consideration as it ranks each of the past six decades in terms of overall quality in the U.K.

Here are the rankings, including the Top 10 fighters from each decade. (An asterisk denotes fighters who did not win a recognized world title.)

#1. 1990s

1. Lennox Lewis
2. Naseem Hamed
3. Chris Eubank
4. Nigel Benn
5. Frank Bruno
6. Steve Robinson
7. Duke McKenzie
8. Johnny Nelson
9. Wayne McCullough
10. Robin Reid

The 1990s tops the list because it introduced hype and flash, as well as some truly magnificent prizefighters.

Frank Bruno (40-5, 38 knockouts) captured the WBC version of the heavyweight title from Oliver McCall in September 1995 but his successor, Lennox Lewis (41-2-1, 32 KOs), became the greatest British heavyweight of all time when he unified the glamour division by outpointing the legendary Evander Holyfield in November 1999.

Nigel Benn (42-5-1, 35 KOs) and Chris Eubank (45-5-2, 23 KOs) engaged in the most heated and compelling rivalry in British boxing history. Eubank won their first encounter by ninth-round stoppage in November 1990 and Benn was deemed very unlucky to get a draw three years later. Both men annexed middleweight and super middleweight championships.

Prince Naseem Hamed (36-1, 31 KOs) front-flipped onto the world scene and captured all but one of four recognized title belts at featherweight. The diminutive showman pocketed millions of pounds by virtue of extravagant ring entrances and a reflex-based power-punching style that made him a crossover attraction and ultimately a Hall of Famer.

Steve Robinson (32-17-2, 17 KOs) and Johnny Nelson (45-12-2, 29 KOs) commenced lengthy reigns as featherweight and cruiserweight titleholders, respectively. The underrated Duke McKenzie won two WBO titles at different weights while Wayne McCullough and Robin Reid captured WBC belts on away soil.

An undisputed world heavyweight champion in Lewis, Eubank and Benn fever and "The Prince" make this the ultimate era for British boxing.

#2. 2010s

1. Carl Froch
2. Tyson Fury
3. Amir Khan
4. Ricky Burns
5. Kell Brook
6. Jamie McDonnell
7. Nathan Cleverly
8. James DeGale
9. Carl Frampton/Scott Quigg
10. Lee Selby

We're only half way through this decade, but what a start.

From late 2010 onward, Carl Froch (33-2, 24 KOs) claimed two 168-pound titles and defeated Mikkel Kessler, Arthur Abraham, Glen Johnson, Lucian Bute and George Groves. Only Andre Ward proved too much for the battle-hardened Englishman to handle.

Tyson Fury (25-0, 18 KOs) sensationally upset Wladimir Klitschko last November in Germany to win the RING, IBF, WBA and WBO heavyweight titles. Colorful and highly controversial, Fury is a breath of fresh air in a division that had been stale for years. A rematch with Klitschko is on the horizon.

Amir Khan (31-3, 19 KOs) triumphed over the likes of Marcos Maidana, Zab Judah and Devon Alexander. Despite two defeats, he unified two junior welterweight titles before moving up in weight and landing the Alvarez fight. Meanwhile, Kell Brook (35-0, 24 KOs) outpointed Shawn Porter on American soil to claim the IBF welterweight title.

Ricky Burns (39-5-1, 13 KOs) and Nathan Cleverly (29-3, 15 KOs) enjoyed lengthy reigns within their respective divisions. Burns won WBO titles at junior lightweight and lightweight while Cleverly held the WBO light heavyweight strap for two years.

Bantamweight Jamie McDonnell (27-2-1, 12 KOs) secured a vacant IBF title and outpointed the heavily favored Tomoki Kameda twice on U.S. soil. Lee Selby, Carl Frampton and Scott Quigg are at the embryonic stages of their own championship journeys.

It doesn't get much better than this.

#3. 2000s

1. Joe Calzaghe
2. Lennox Lewis
3. Ricky Hatton
4. David Haye
5. Carl Froch
6. Scott Harrison
7. Johnny Nelson
8. Clinton Woods
9. Amir Khan
10. Junior Witter

Remember when Joe Calzaghe (46-0, 32 KOs) was WBO super middleweight champion and nobody outside of the U.K. really cared? It sounds harsh but that's how the quick-fisted Welshman closed out the 1990s, before his moment finally arrived.

In March 2006, Calzaghe took IBF titleholder Jeff Lacy to school, claiming a lopsided decision victory and recognition as the best super middleweight on the planet. He never looked back. A career-best victory over Mikkel Kessler allowed him to add WBA and WBC straps to his collection and he closed out with points wins over Bernard Hopkins and Roy Jones Jr. at light heavyweight.

In June 2005, in Manchester, Ricky Hatton (45-3, 32 KOs) stopped long-reigning junior welterweight king Kostya Tszyu on one of the most electric nights ever in British boxing. The immensely popular Hatton added another belt at 140 pounds as well as a version of the welterweight title but fell short against the best fighters of his generation – Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Manny Pacquiao.

Lennox Lewis retired in 2004, completely satisfied after beating up Mike Tyson. Featherweight Scott Harrison (27-3-2, 15 KOs) won, lost and regained the WBO featherweight championship. David Haye (27-2, 25 KOs) unified three world titles at cruiserweight and also picked up a WBA heavyweight strap. Undistinguished talents Junior Witter and Clinton Woods became champions, as did future stars Carl Froch and Amir Khan before the decade drew to a close.

Two-division world titleholder Joe Calzaghe fully blossomed in the 2000s.

#4. 1970s

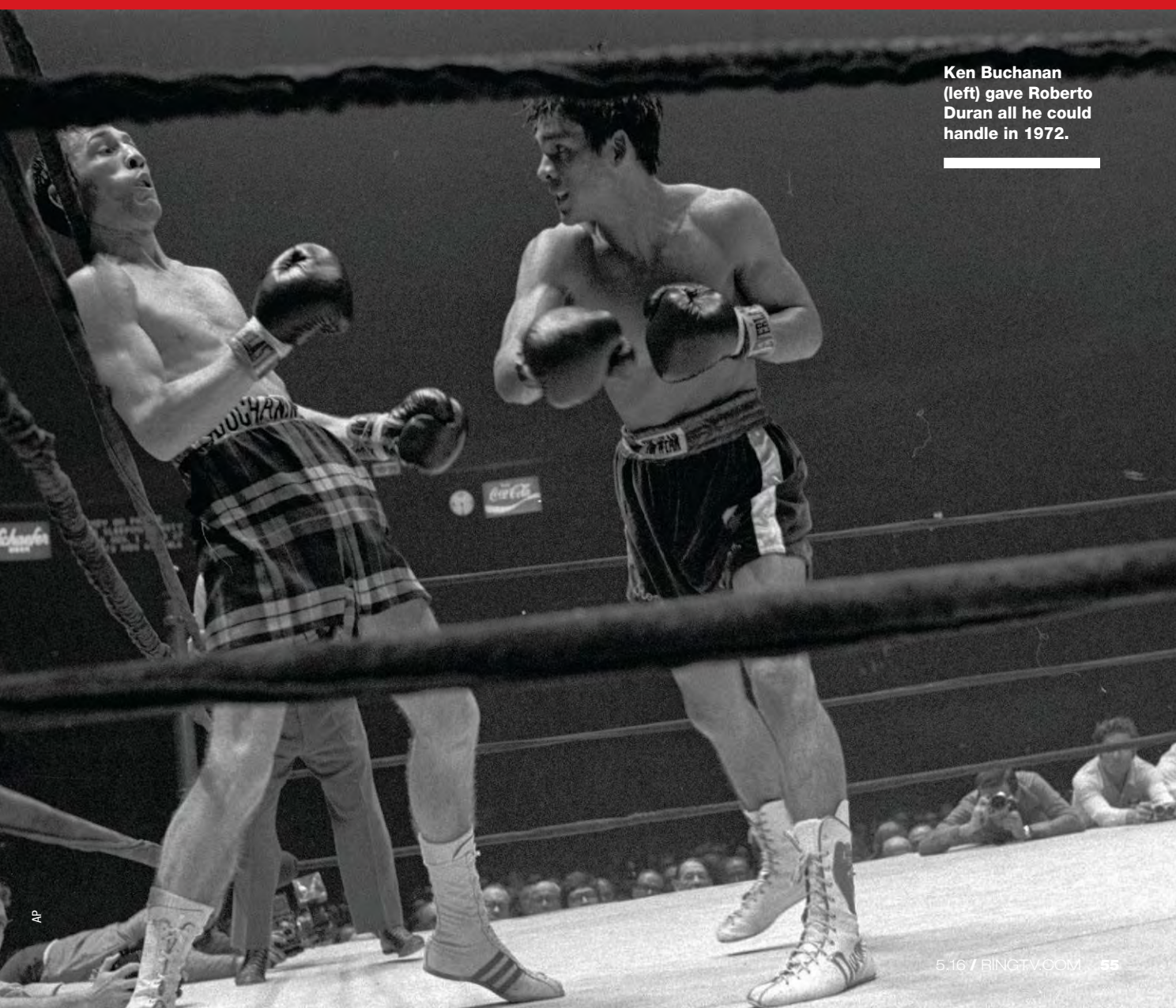
1. Ken Buchanan
2. John Conteh
3. John H. Stracey
4. Maurice Hope
5. Jim Watt
6. Alan Minter *
7. Chris Finnegan *
8. Joe Bugner *
9. Charlie Magri *
10. Johnny Owen *

The great Ken Buchanan (61-8, 27 KOs) was lightweight fire in the early '70s. The Scotsman outpointed Ismael Laguna and Ruben Navarro to establish himself as undisputed lightweight champion and it took a peak version of Roberto Duran to derail him on a controversial 13th-round stoppage in June 1972.

Two years later, Liverpool's John Conteh (34-4-1, 24 KOs) claimed the vacant WBC light heavyweight title with a 15-round decision over Jorge Victor Ahumada. He made three successful defenses but financial disputes led to his decision to relinquish the title. He never regained a light heavyweight championship despite gallant efforts against Mate Parlov and Matthew Saad Muhammad.

London's John H. Stracey (45-5-1, 37 KOs) cutting up and ultimately stopping Cuban legend Jose Napoles in six rounds to win the WBC welterweight title in December 1975 was a wonderful result for British boxing. Maurice Hope (30-4-1, 24 KOs) traveled to Italy to defeat Rocky Mattioli for the WBC junior middleweight title in March 1979. The following month Jim Watt (38-8, 27 KOs) annexed the vacant WBC lightweight crown with a 12th-round stoppage of Alfredo Pitalua.

Light heavyweight Chris Finnegan (29-7-1, 16 KOs) pushed the great Bob Foster to the brink before losing by a 14th-round knockout in the 1972 RING Fight of the Year and Joe Bugner (69-13-1, 41 KOs) took heavyweight legends Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier the distance in gallant losing efforts (Ali on two occasions, one of them for the heavyweight championship).



Ken Buchanan (left) gave Roberto Duran all he could handle in 1972.

AP

#5. 1980s

1. Lloyd Honeyghan
2. Barry McGuigan
3. Alan Minter
4. Dennis Andries
5. Jim Watt
6. Terry Marsh
7. Dave McAuley
8. Duke McKenzie
9. Charlie Magri
10. Herol Graham *

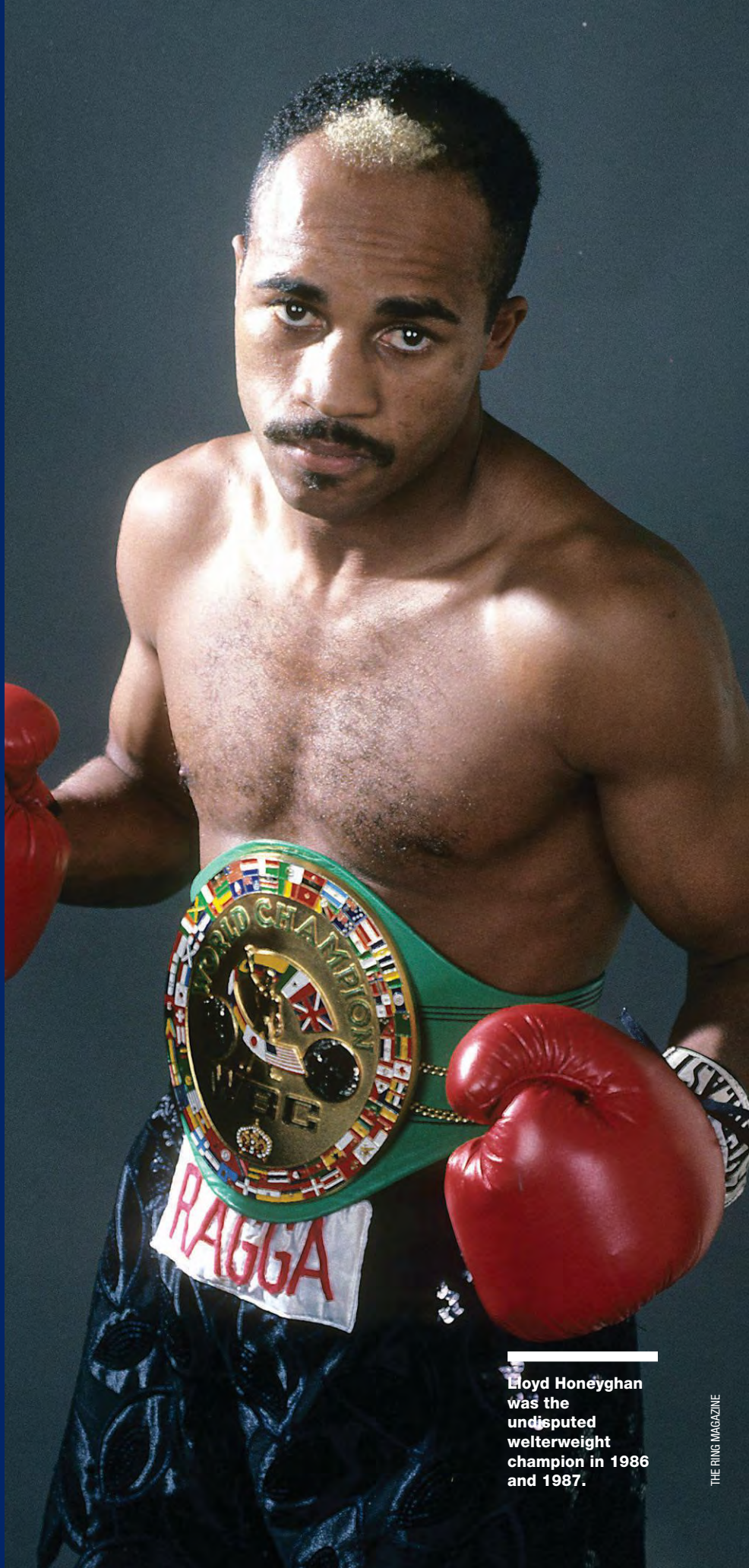
Lloyd Honeyghan (43-5, 30 KOs) stopped American Donald Curry in six rounds in a colossal upset to claim the undisputed welterweight championship in September 1986. He would defend three times before losing and regaining the WBC version of the title from Jorge Vaca.

If Honeyghan produced the biggest shock, then Barry McGuigan (32-3, 28 KOs) easily produced the most fan affection. And he could also fight. In June 1985, McGuigan claimed the WBA featherweight title by dropping the brilliant Eusebio Pedroza en route to a 15-round unanimous decision. The future Hall of Famer defended twice successfully.

Alan Minter (39-9, 23 KOs) won the undisputed middleweight championship by outpointing Vito Antuofermo in March 1980 and followed up by cutting him to ribbons in the return. Minter then had the misfortune of running into a prime Marvelous Marvin Hagler, who stopped him in three brutal rounds.

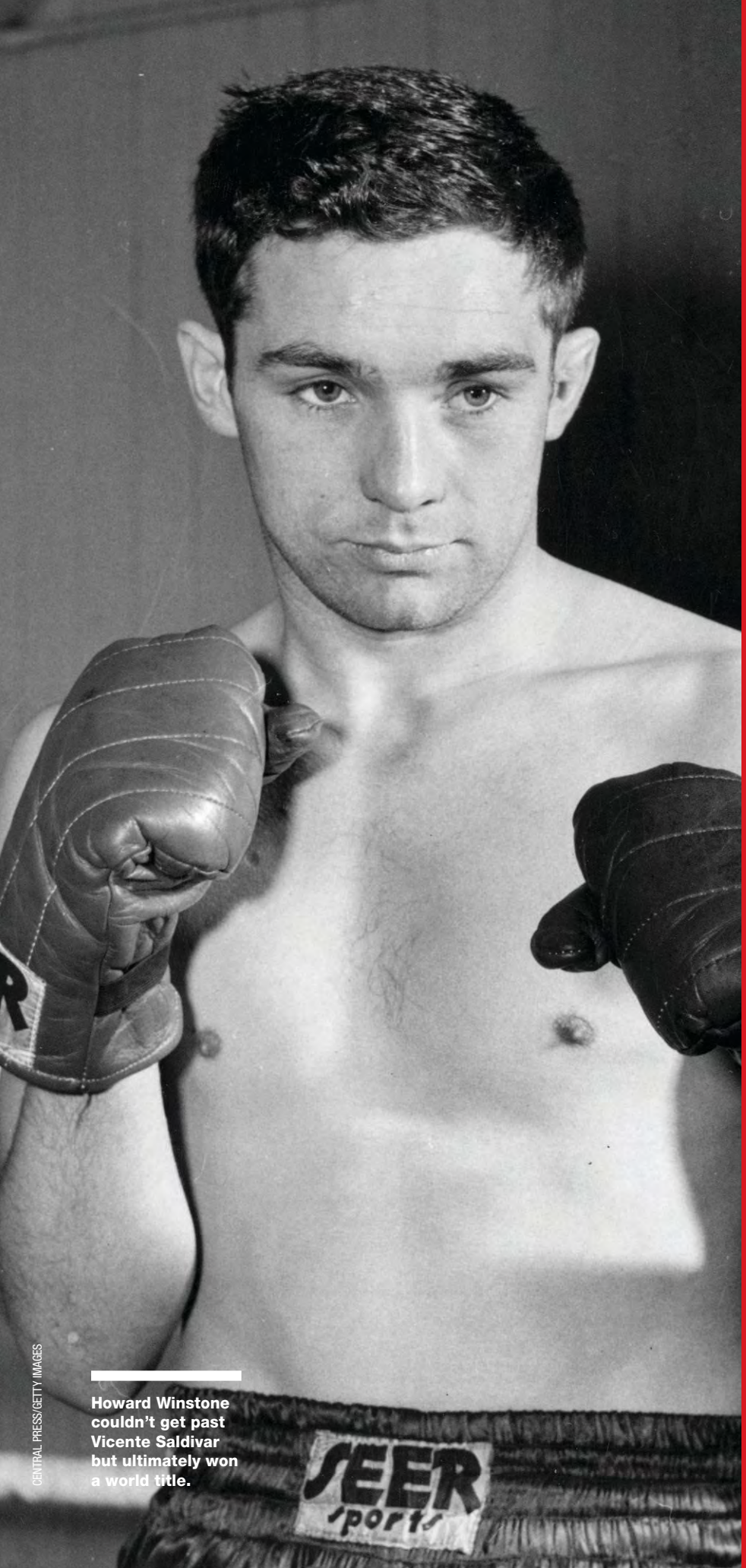
Charlie Magri (30-5, 23 KOs) captured the WBC flyweight title in 1983 and Guyana-born Londoner Dennis Andries (49-14-2, 30 KOs) won the first of three light heavyweight titles in 1986. Duke McKenzie, Dave McAuley and Terry Marsh all picked up belts governed by the newly formed International Boxing Federation.

Herol Graham (48-6, 28 KOs) is arguably the finest British fighter never to win a world title. During the '80s, he gave peak versions of Sumbu Kalambay and Mike McCallum hell in close decision losses.



Lloyd Honeyghan was the undisputed welterweight champion in 1986 and 1987.

THE RING MAGAZINE



CENTRAL PRESS/GETTY IMAGES

Howard Winstone couldn't get past Vicente Saldivar but ultimately won a world title.

#6. 1960s

1. Howard Winstone
2. Terry Downes
3. Johnny Caldwell
4. Walter McGowan
5. Henry Cooper *
6. Brian Curvis *
7. Dave Charnley *
8. Alan Rudkin *
9. Chic Calderwood *
10. Dick Richardson *

In May 1961, Johnny Caldwell (29-5-1, 14 knockouts) won the undisputed bantamweight championship with a 15-round decision over Alphonse Halimi and defended it successfully against him in a rematch. The Belfast, Northern Ireland, native was relieved of the crown by terrific Brazilian Eder Jofre the following year.

Terry Downes (35-9, 28 KOs) claimed the undisputed middleweight title by a 10th-round stoppage in his second shot at champion Paul Pender in July 1961. The Englishman's reign would last seven months as Pender outscored him in Boston the following April.

Between September 1965 and October 1967, Mexican Vicente Saldivar twice outpointed Howard Winstone (61-6, 27 KOs) over 15 rounds and stopped him in the 12th round of their third meeting. The Welshman would later get a shot at the vacant WBC featherweight title and stopped Japan's Mitsunori Seki in nine.

Walter McGowan (32-7-1, 14 KOs) was a talented flyweight from Scotland who took the WBC title from Italian Salvatore Burruni in June 1966. Thailand's Chartchai Chionoi defeated him six months later and came from behind to stop McGowan in a rematch.

None of those sensational victories caused a bigger sensation than the popular Henry Cooper's (40-14-1, 27 KOs) knockdown of Muhammad Ali (then Cassius Clay) in June 1963. "Our 'Enry" would lose the 10-round non-title fight and a world heavyweight championship rematch but, like the other fighters listed, had enormous success at the domestic level.

CHAMPION FACTORY

THE VIEW FROM INSIDE JAPAN'S REVERED TEIKEN BOXING GYM

By **Brian Harty** • Photos by **Naoki Fukuda**

Lightweight prospect Shuya Masaki hones his skills on the double-end bag.

The Teiken Boxing Gym in Tokyo is home to many elite fighters, past and present.

Five floors above the upscale shops, French restaurants and traditional confectioneries in Tokyo's Kagurazaka district, beside what used to be the moat surrounding the Shogun's castle, sits one of Japan's most hallowed training halls.

An elevator will deliver you to all the familiar sounds: the speedbag's drone, the pap-pap-pap of mitts and the jingle of heavybag chains. Stepping onto a freshly vacuumed welcome mat and swapping your street shoes for a mandatory indoor pair, though, you'll notice something unnatural about the Teiken Boxing Gym: It's clean. If you're visiting after a big win, you'll even see flowers.

There's a good chance that will be the case. The gym is the home base of all those who fight under the Teiken Promotions banner, a powerhouse roster that includes current titleholders Shinsuke Yamanaka, Jorge Linares, Carlos Cuadras and Yu Kimura; former RING champion Toshiyuki Igarashi; former titleholders Takashi Miura, Akifumi Shimoda and Takahiro Ao; up-and-coming middleweight Ryota Murata and, when he's in town, pound-for-pound king Roman Gonzalez.

The gym dates back to 1926, when Sadayuki Ogino, a former Japanese champion at 122

Venezuelan lightweight titleholder Jorge Linares found a second home at the Teiken Gym.

GOD
LEFT
KNOWS

NAOKI FUKUDA

Clockwise from top left, a portrait of Teiken founder Akira Honda hangs above where trainer Sendai Tanaka (right) works with welterweight Yoshihiro Kamegai; former 130-pound titleholder Takashi Miura works the mitts; middleweight prospect Ryota Murata spars and skips rope; and bantamweight titleholder Shinsuke Yamanaka attacks the heavy bag.

122 pounds, broke away from the country's first boxing institution, the Nippon Kento Club, after its gym was destroyed by a massive earthquake in 1923. Twenty years later, Ogino's Teikoku Kento Association Kendosha became simply "Teiken" under the presidency of Akira Honda. After Honda's untimely death in 1964, leadership fell to his son, Akihiko Honda, who was just 17 at the time.

The younger Honda produced his first world champion in flyweight Masao Oba in 1970 and has since become the most influential promoter in Japan, with Teiken Promotions fostering alumni that include Genaro Hernandez, Toshiaki Nishioka and Edwin Valero, among many other well-known names. The Teiken Gym, meanwhile, has established three affiliates and has occupied its present location in Kagurazaka since 1998.

Loyalty is fierce within its walls. Unlike the capricious alliances seen in other countries, fighters in Japan typically stay with one promoter for their entire careers. Likewise, the gym's membership is limited to Teiken signees, although other top fighters, such as Nonito Donaire and Paul Malignaggi, have trained there. RING

Photographer Naoki Fukuda's award-winning images appear regularly in THE RING.

PRESENT AT CREATION

WHEN CASSIUS CLAY RULED ROME

By **Randy Roberts and Johnny Smith**

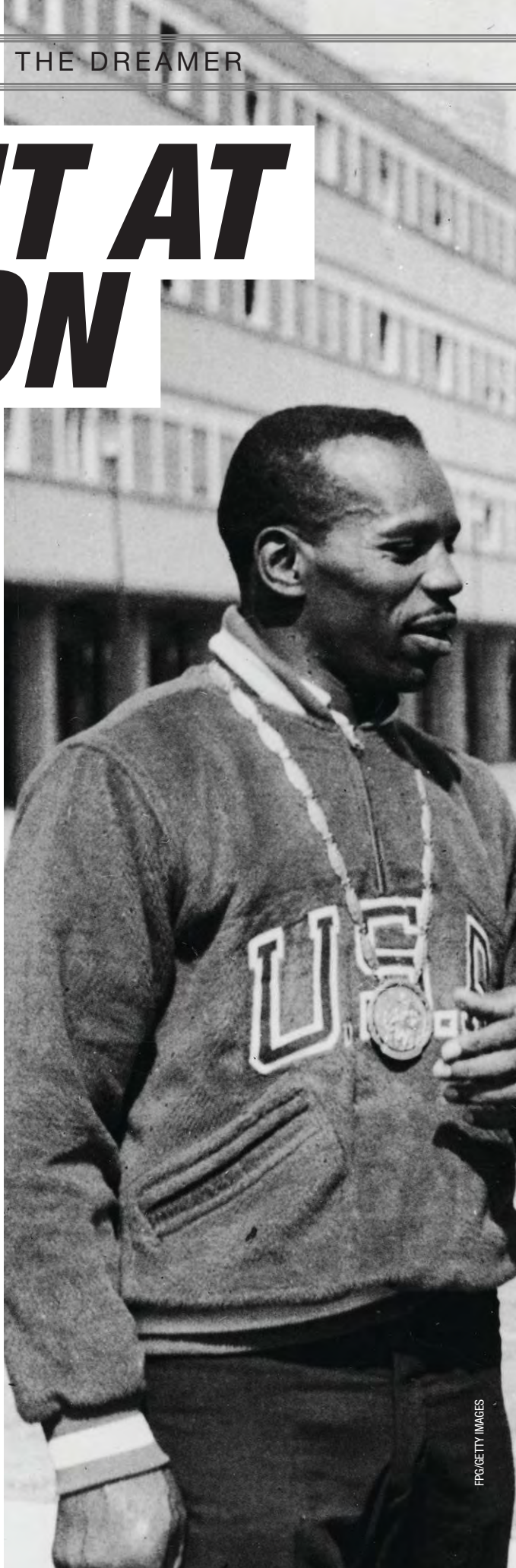
Cassius Clay knew – knew with every fiber of his being – that he was destined to leave his mark on the world. Boxing was his ticket to fame, fortune and celebrity. "I am a man of destiny," he declared in 1960. "I'm gonna win the heavyweight championship of the world, earn a million dollars and get me a chauffeur-driven, tomato-red Cadillac with a built-in hi-fi, television and telephones." And that was only for starters. There would be more.

On the eve of the Rome Olympics, in mid-August, a few days before he trudged aboard a prop DC-7C ("Seven Seas") for his long flight to Italy, Clay, only 18 years old, arrived in New York as the most accomplished amateur boxer in the United States. He had already won Kentucky Golden Gloves titles, national Golden Gloves titles and national Amateur Athletic Union titles. Dozens of trophies, cups and plaques filled every room in his family's white, one-story, four-bedroom house on the segregated West End of Louisville.

In New York he gathered with his fellow Olympians, attended prepping sessions, and dined with the group at a reception at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. When not engaged in some required function, he wandered the city, intrigued by the bustle and variety of the capital of the world.

Dick Schaap, sports editor of Newsweek, met Clay during this frantic period. Combing the hotel where the athletes were staying, searching for stories and background material for his "long-distance coverage of the Games," Schaap heard about Cassius Marcellus Clay, a boxer who the other Olympians insisted was as wild and flamboyant as his Roman-sounding name suggested. He learned that Clay was one of the top prospects on the boxing squad, and, beyond that, the most loquacious member of the team. The combination of talents proved irresistible to the young reporter.

Cassius was as promised. As an athlete, Schaap saw immediately that he was unique athlete. The writer did not have to prod him for a story or a quote. If there had been a typewriter around, the boxer could have pounded out his own copy. '(H)e was a boy – a bubbling boy without a serious thought in his head, without a problem that he didn't feel his fists or his wit would eventually solve," Schaap



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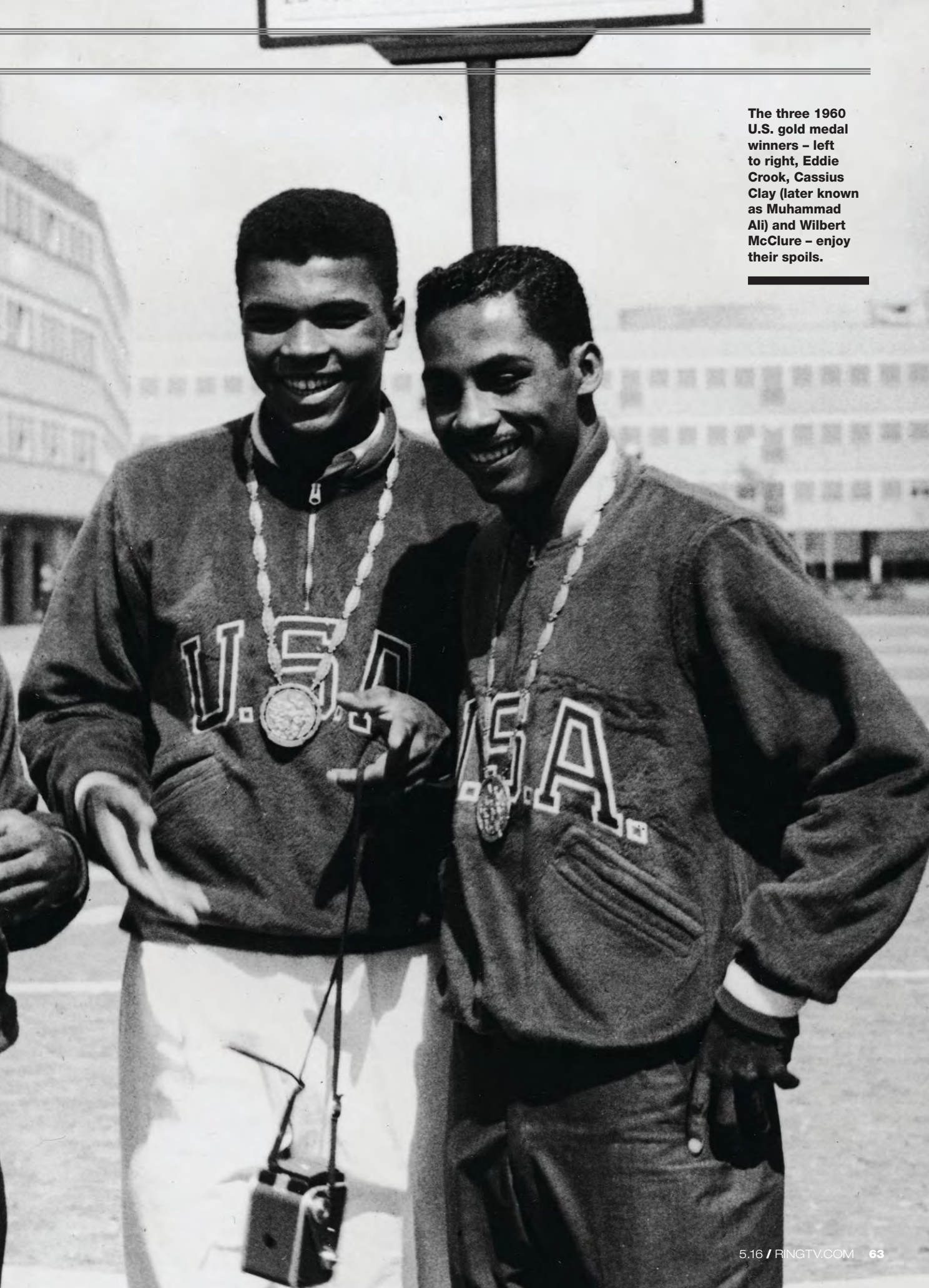


The three 1960 U.S. gold medal winners – left to right, Eddie Crook, Cassius Clay (later known as Muhammad Ali) and Wilbert McClure – enjoy their spoils.

judged. Attracted to him for his story potential as well as his effervescent personality, he invited Cassius and a few other black fighters for a trip to Harlem and Sugar Ray Robinson's bar. The mention of Clay's hero sealed the deal but in truth it was an easy sale.

As Schaap remembered, on the drive uptown Cassius dominated the conversation. His message: "I'm great, I'm beautiful, I'm going to Rome and I'm gonna whip all those cats and then I'm coming back and turning pro and becoming the champion of the world." Schaap had never met an athlete like him. "(H)e had no doubts, no fears, no second thoughts, not an ounce of false humility." He had a plan and a destiny and he was right on schedule.

They arrived at Sugar Ray's place on Seventh Avenue near 124th Street but there was no purple Lincoln Continental parked in front, which meant that the famous middleweight champion had not yet arrived. Biding time, Clay and Schaap wandered about, walking a block north to 125th Street and the Hotel Theresa, the epicenter of black Harlem. The sights silenced even Clay.

A group of black people formed a half-circle around a man who was standing on a soapbox and talking about the dangers of white people. On the fringe of the crowd, an addict was having a "dope fit." The man on the soapbox said that white people were dangerous and could not be trusted. His message echoed the intelligentsia of the Harlem Renaissance, when Black Nationalists urged street-corner congregations to buy black goods only from black merchants.

Clay had never seen or heard anything like it. He watched and listened, stunned at the speaker's audacity. "He couldn't believe that a black man would stand up in public and argue against white America," Schaap commented. It was the sort of talk that a black man would get lynched for in the South; five years earlier, in rural Mississippi, Emmitt Till was brutally murdered for saying a lot less. Shaking his head, he asked the white reporter, "How can he talk like that? Ain't he gonna get in trouble?"

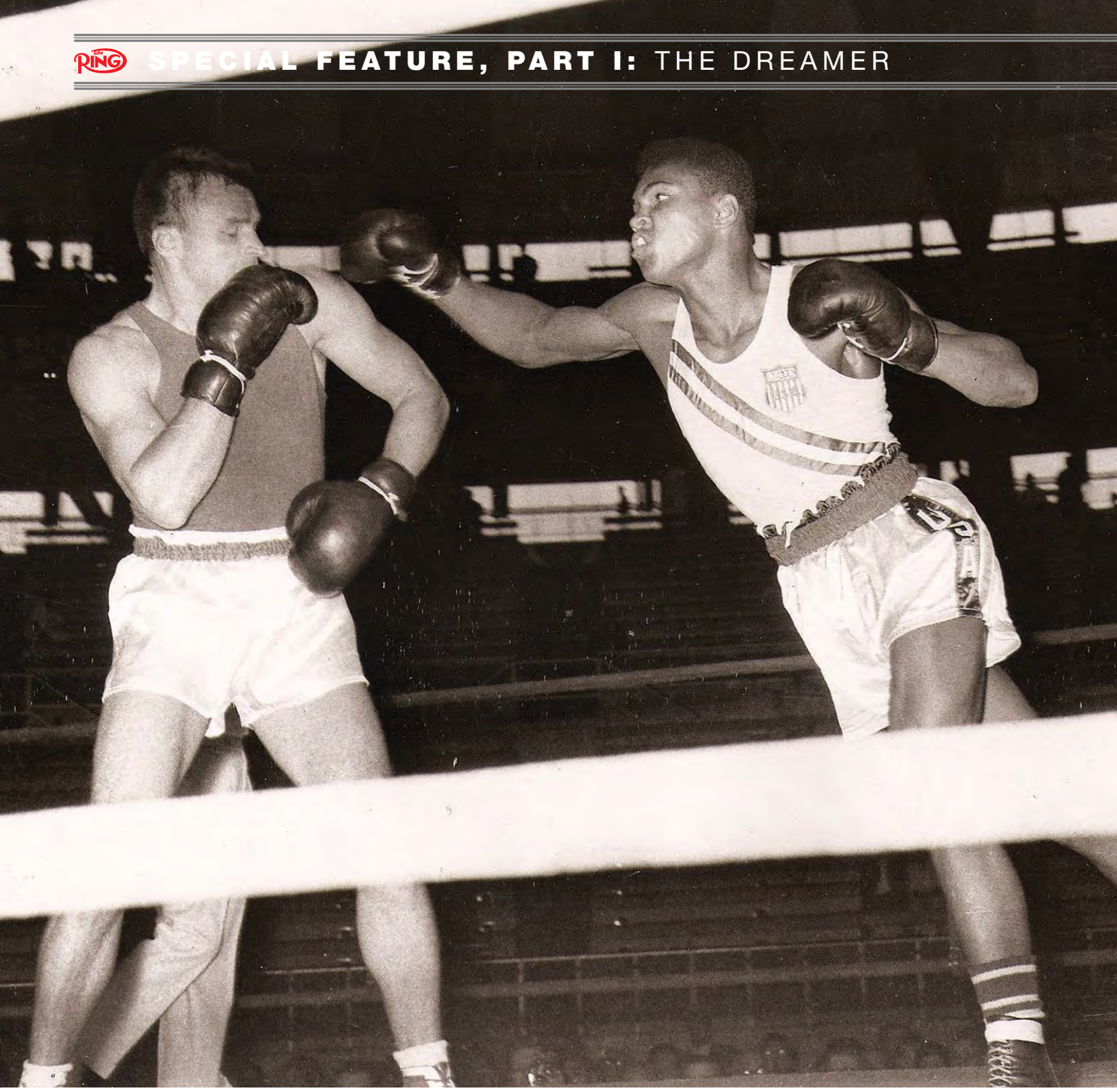
While Cassius was still wondering about the soapbox speaker, a purple Lincoln Continental, with monogrammed initials "SRR" and painted boxing gloves on the driver-side door, pulled into its reserved place. Sugar Ray had arrived and Clay floated toward the spot like a moth to light. If the speaker was talking about black economic advancement and black success – control over his destiny, ownership of a business, and pride in himself – Sugar Ray was the most visible example. Since the retirement of Joe Louis, he was the reigning monarch of Harlem. He was Clay's dream of success and the young boxer was as giddy as a child on Christmas. "Here he comes," Cassius shrieked. "Here comes the great man Robinson."

In August 1960 THE RING ranked Robinson fourth in the middleweight division. In January he had lost the title in Boston to Paul Pender and, after dominating the division for a decade, he was sliding into the twilight of his career. But he had lost his crown and regained it so many times in the past that no one was about to write him off as a has-been quite yet. And he still looked so store-window fashionable, dressed as if the hippest designer clothed him, his hair slicked back in the "Harlem cat" style and a razor-thin mustache etched just above his smiling lips. There was not the slightest doubt that Sugar Ray was the epitome of cool, as smooth and as elegant and as unapproachable as Miles Davis. To get anything more intimate from him than a quick glance and the slightest of nods required offering something in return.

Schaap's standing in the press gave him just enough clout for a brief notice from Sugar Ray. He quickly introduced Cassius and the other Olympic hopefuls. Robinson, "in his

'(Clay) couldn't believe that a black man would stand up in public and argue against white America.' – Dick Schaap

Clay easily outpointed Australian Anthony Madigan in the semifinals.

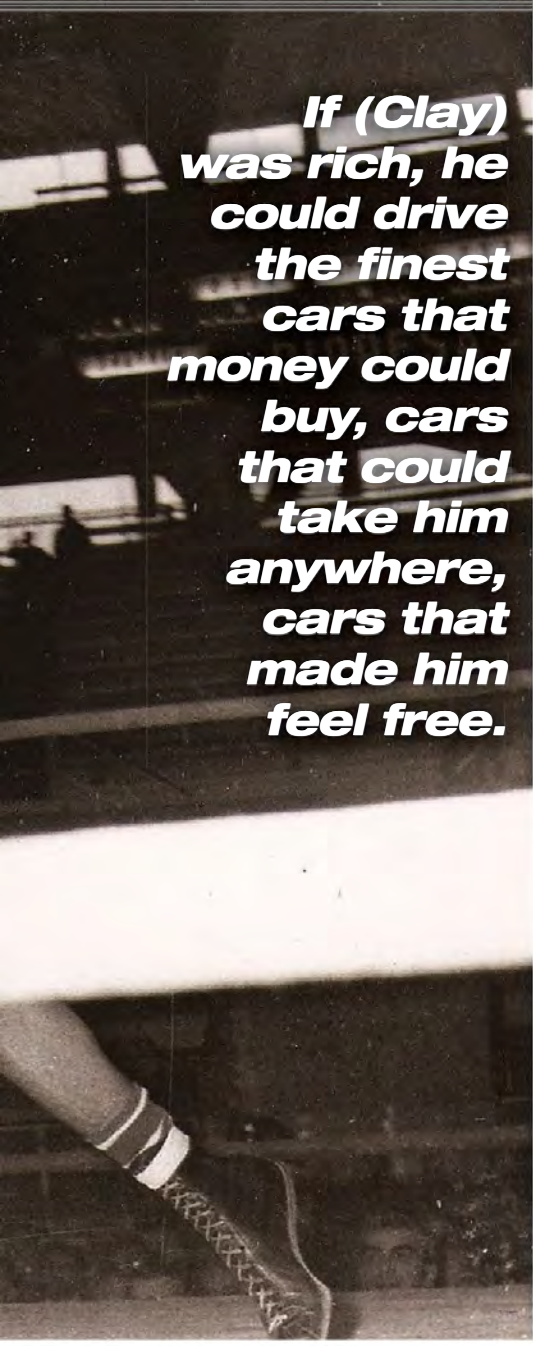


bored, superior way," autographed a picture of himself, gave it to Clay, flashed a perfect smile and then floated away like a ghost.

"That Sugar Ray, he's something," Cassius gushed. "Someday I'm gonna own two Cadillacs – and a Ford for just getting around in." Clay's fascination with Cadillacs signified something more than desired status. For a young black man who grew up in segregation, he believed that he had no chance of moving into Louisville's nicest neighborhoods – the white neighborhoods – no matter how wealthy he became. But if he was rich, he could drive the finest cars that money could buy, cars that could take him anywhere, cars that made him feel free.

Like his father, who planned someday to paint a marvelous mural and record a hit single or two, Cassius was a dreamer. He dreamed of fame and wealth, of creating his own heaven on earth and living the good life of Sugar Ray Robinson. "I dream about what it's gonna be like," he told Schaap. "I'll have a hundred-thousand-dollar home and a beautiful wife. (S)omeday I'll own a pretty Cassius Clay Hotel in Louisville and if business is good, I'll branch out into New York and California."

He had no limits in his dreams. In one recurrent dream, he ran down Louisville's Broadway Avenue when suddenly a truck started rolling toward him. "I run at the truck and wave my arms and then I take off and I'm flying. I go right over the truck and all the people are standing around and cheering and waving at me. And I wave back and keep on flying."



The Soviet Union's Gennady Shatkov lost to Clay in the quarterfinals.

Later, perhaps, he would fly, but during his brief stay in New York before traveling to Rome, his dreams were more tangible. He would win a gold medal at the Olympics, turn professional and become the youngest heavyweight champion in history. The rest would follow – money, Cadillacs, houses, and a wife. It all would begin in Rome.

Not all sportswriters were as confident of Cassius's chances in the Eternal City. Some, like Lew Eskin, a feature writer for THE RING, commented that Clay "is rated the top amateur in the U. S. and a sure shot for an Olympic gold medal." Others, however, believed that the Europeans, especially the Russians and the Poles, had superior amateur boxers. Sports Illustrated noted that although Clay had been dubbed "another Patterson" he would face stiff competition against the older and more experienced Europeans. On paper, the light heavyweight division was the most competitive in the Games. Among the talented boxers were Gennady Schatkov of the Soviet Union and Gheorghe Negrea of Romania. In the 1956 Melbourne Games, Schatkov had won a gold medal in the middleweight division and Negrea had captured a silver in the light heavyweight division. In addition Australian Tony Madigan and Pole Zbigniew Pietrzykowski were experienced boxers who had won major amateur titles.

Schatkov, Negrea, and Pietrzykowski concerned Clay infinitely less than the flight to Rome. By the day of the departure, second thoughts about the trip consumed his mind and mouth. He was petrified, telling anyone who would listen that he was not going to get on that plane. "If God wanted us to fly, he would give us wings," was his featured line. His teammate Wilbert "Skeeter" McClure refuted Cassius's logic: "Well, we're flying, and we ain't got no wings, so how do you explain that?" It was a point well taken but one lost on his terrified teammate. "Cassius was honestly scared. It wasn't an act or cry for attention. It was fear."

Nikos Spanakos, another teammate, recalled that Cassius screamed through the entire flight even though a coach had tried to silence him with sleeping pill. He talked about himself, of course, and how he would win the Olympic gold medal and go on to everlasting fame and enormous wealth as a professional. But it was a long flight and, after some hours, even Cassius ran out of things to say about Cassius. So he pontificated on the other members of the team, dispensing predictions about which fighters would win medals and which would not. It all boiled down to who "had the Olympic style and were furthering the Olympic image." Fortunately the sleeping pills did their job for many of the athletes on the plane, sparing them from hearing Clay's transatlantic monologue.

It was a long, slow flight, with too little space for the athletes and a fuel stop at Ireland's Shannon Field. Luckily, Cassius was on the first DC-7 and not the second, which developed an oil leak and was delayed in Shannon while mechanics patched the engine. From Shannon it was a straight shot over Cornwall and Paris to Rome. Clay and the other boxers arrived on Tuesday night, Aug. 16, but there was no time for rest. The next morning boxing coach Jules Mendez ordered an early wake-up call for the fighters and sent them on a long run. They had only a few days to adjust to the time change and the brutally hot temperatures.

But Cassius soon learned that he would face greater problems than the baked streets of Rome. Up until then boxing had been a temporary escape from the racism of America. Inside the ring, he experienced a rough democracy, winning or losing on his own merits. He knew, of course, of that other world – the murder of Emmett Till, the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the struggle for civil rights. But he had avoided the politics of race. Now, in Rome, he would have to become a politician, an ambassador for America.

Next issue: When Cassius Clay Ruled Rome, Part II: The Politician.

Randy Roberts is a professor of history at Purdue University and an award-winning author. His latest book, "Blood Brothers," co-authored with Johnny Smith, is about the relationship between Muhammad Ali and Malcolm X. Smith is an assistant professor of history at Georgia Tech.

2016 OLYMPICS
Rio de Janeiro: Aug. 5-21
BOXING COMPETITION
Dates: Aug. 6-21
Venue: Riocentro, Pavilion 6
Men: 10 weight divisions
Women: 3 weight divisions

Will some of gold medalist Andre Ward's magic rub off on bantamweight Shakur Stevenson (above and in inset) and his American teammates in Rio?

HERE WE GO AGAIN

TEAM USA ENTERS THE 2016 OLYMPICS AGAINST A SHAKY BACKDROP

By **Bernard Fernandez**

It is the beginning of an Olympic year, which as always means that hope springs eternal for those who are focused on the quadrennial event that may forever define their lives. Winners of the U.S. Olympic Boxing Team Trials, most of whom have yet to qualify for a berth in the big show in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in August, can look out the windows of their training facility in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and see the snowcapped peaks of the nearby Rocky Mountains, signifying the glorious heights they believe they can scale, the precious medals they sense will be theirs and the tears of joy they will shed upon hearing the Star-Spangled Banner played at the end of a journey that for most has lasted a decade or longer.

"We're super-optimistic," said heavyweight Cam F. Awesome, 27, whose legally changed last name reflects the sense of ultimate destiny he and his American teammates share. "Most of us need to qualify in the Continentals (March 8-20 in Buenos Aires) but it's against pretty much the same competition we had at the Pan American Games and I believe we had five or six medals there. I see us as taking a pretty full team to Rio. Even for those of us who don't qualify (by finishing in the top three) in Argentina, we have two more qualifying tournaments (May 13-22 in Sofia, Bulgaria, and June 7-9 in Baku, Azerbaijan) after that.

"Look, I believe USA Boxing is on the right track and growing. There are always going to be some growing pains. Changes have been made and, I think, for the better. We're doing some great things now. I truly think our team is strong enough to get medals. And with medals comes money. And with money we'll get additional resources and recognition."

Awesome, the oldest of the 10 men's Trials winners and an athlete

member of USA Boxing's Board of Directors, is charismatic and sincere enough to shoot for the moon and make any listener believe that glory is within his and his teammates' grasp. But members of the 2012 U.S. men's team were no less convinced that they would draw heavily from the well of American Olympic prosperity that previously had produced an international-best 108 boxing medals (including 49 golds), only to find that it was a historically dry hole. For the first time since the modern Olympics were reintroduced in 1896, U.S. men failed to claim a single medal in the London Games. In fact, they won a total of just four bouts. A complete shutout was averted only because American women, competing in the first Olympics open to boxers of their gender, came home with a gold (Claressa Shields) and bronze (Marlen Esparza).

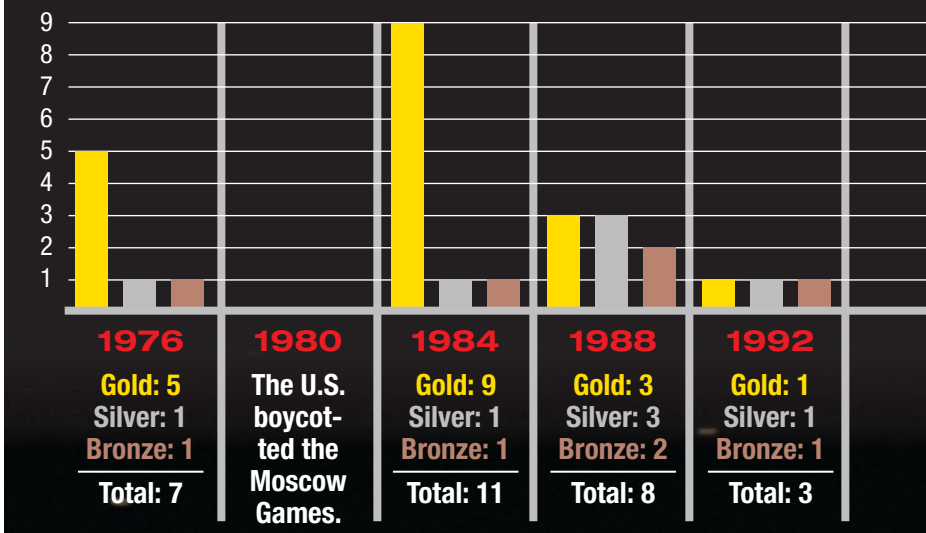
The poor performance by the men shouldn't have been a complete shock. Since the medal mother lode was mined at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics (nine golds, a silver and a bronze), it has been a curious case of diminishing returns for the U.S. – eight medals (including three golds) in Seoul, South Korea, in 1988; three medals (one gold) in Barcelona, Spain, in 1992; six medals (one gold) in Atlanta in 1996; four medals (no golds) in Sydney, Australia, in 2000; two medals (one gold) in Athens, Greece, in 2004; one medal (not gold) in Beijing, China, in 2008.

So what has been happening with America's incredible shrinking Olympic boxing presence? And what, if anything, can be done to reverse the trend? There are many theories to explain the long, sad slide, most of which deal with money, precious little of which has been allocated for USA Boxing and too much of which is being funneled into countries that have come to consider Olympic medals as emblems of national prestige and are willing to pay dearly to acquire them by any means necessary.

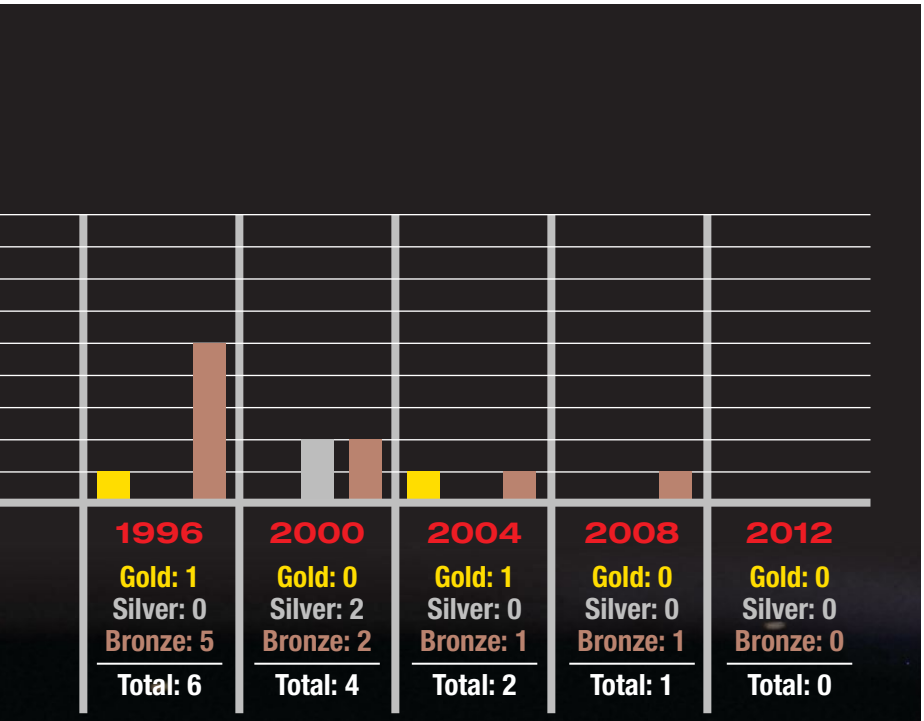
Dr. Ching-kuo Wu of Chinese Taipei, who since 2006 has served as president of

DECLINING FORTUNES

The U.S. men's boxing team has gone steadily downhill since it won 11 medals at the 1984 Olympics, capped by a complete shutout in 2012. Here is how the Americans have fared since the 1976 Games.



Heavyweight Cam F. Awesome is one of the U.S.' top medal hopes.



Note: The 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles were boycotted by all but one Eastern Bloc nation.

the scandal-plagued International Boxing Association (AIBA), the global governing body of amateur boxing, offered his own thoughts on the problems besetting USA Boxing during the 2014 AIBA Congress in Jehu, South Korea.

"We are involved in trying to make things change," he said when asked about the embarrassing shutout suffered by the American men in London. "United States Boxing is unlike other national federations. There are so many (state and regional subsets) and they are totally divided. There needs to be a strong central body to lead U.S. boxing movement. Kazakhstan, very strong boxing federation. China, very strong boxing federation. Japan, the same. But United States, very loose organization. Unless there is complete change with strong leadership, there can be no (improvement).

"(The U.S. Olympic Committee's) allocation (to USA Boxing) is $300,000. For such a big country, that is impossible. With so little money, it only goes to administration. No development. The structure is totally wrong. I say you have to support your boxing to bring back your glory. You used to get five gold medals (at the 1976 Montreal Olympics), nine gold medals (in 1984). Now you have zero, except for women. Why? Because nobody pays attention. Nobody cares. If somebody really cares, then put money in. Bring in the best boxers. Bring in the best coaches. Centralize. USA is 50 states. Boxing federation is only symbolic. What power (do they have)? No money. Bad cycle. Worst of the worst."

Dr. Wu paints a depressing picture of the current state of USA Boxing but there are those who say the primary culprit in the decline of American prestige at the Olympic level is the face that Wu sees whenever he looks in the mirror.

Teddy Atlas, the blunt-speaking color commentator for NBC's coverage of Olympic boxing in London, Beijing, Athens and Sydney, will not return to the microphone for those duties in Rio. Atlas and his broadcast partner, Bob Papa, became AIBA's Public Enemies No. 1 when they loudly and frequently spoke out against what they believed

were injustices perpetrated daily in the Olympic ring that were not only ignored by Dr. Wu and other AIBA officials but, some allege, may well have been orchestrated in advance. Prior to the final two days of the boxing competition, security personnel advised Atlas and Papa that they were not welcome in the arena and escorted them to another site where they met with Dr. Wu and NBC officials. They called the medal rounds off a monitor from a small studio that Atlas described as "a closet."

"Most kids get one shot at the Olympics, if that," Atlas said. "They spend a big part of their young lives with that dream. The ring is supposed to be a chamber of truth. We find out who those two fighters are, what they're willing to be and where they're willing to go. That's pretty magnificent to watch, for the most part. It's not magnificent to watch when you've got corrupt officials distorting it, ripping the hearts out of fighters' chests and then stepping on them. And that's what I watched them do. I watched them do it nearly every day. It sickened me."

In doing his standard preparatory work for London, Atlas said he and Papa became aware of a report done by the British Broadcasting Company a couple of years earlier that alleged someone from Azerbaijan, an oil- and mineral-rich former satellite country of the old Soviet Union, was prepared to pay millions of dollars to "buy" two Olympic gold medals in boxing.

"The story was never properly refuted," Atlas said. "There were a lot of lingering questions. What that told me was that Bob and I had to be alert. Our first night, I mentioned the story in a journalistically responsible fashion. A lot of people would have stayed away from it, I know that, but I thought it would be irresponsible to stay away from it. So I said, 'Look, this is out there, I'm not pointing fingers. All I'm saying is I'm aware and now you're aware. Let the Games begin.' And the Games began."

They began with what Atlas said were "bad decisions. I mean, really bad decisions. I watched this guy from Japan knock down a guy from Azerbaijan *seven* times and the Azerbaijan guy's point total kept going up! On one of the knockdowns the referee actually stopped counting and helped the Azerbaijan guy up! Bob and I were, like, 'Can they really be this arrogant? This cold, this uncaring? Don't these people have any sense of right and wrong, that they can do this right in front of the whole world?'"

Dubious decisions long have been a part of the Olympic boxing fabric. The one most frequently cited might be Roy Jones Jr.'s "loss" to South Korea's Park Si-Hun in the light middleweight gold medal bout in 1988 but there have been other examples as or nearly as egregious. The shocking points nod that went against Floyd Mayweather Jr. and for Bulgaria's Serafim Todorov in 1996 was just as odious but it was in a semifinal so it didn't resonate to the same extent. Mayweather had to settle for a consolation bronze medal. But Atlas' opinion is that the malfeasance is not directed solely or even mostly toward U.S. boxers, which explains why rumors are rampant that boxing, unless drastically cleaned up, will not survive as an Olympic sport past the 2020 Games in Tokyo.

Perhaps the fear that a level playing field does not exist is why Jesse Hart, one of the United States' best hopes for a gold medal in Beijing and London, gave up on his Olympic dream to turn professional and why Erickson Lubin, targeted for the same lead role in Rio de Janeiro, also went directly to the pros upon turning 18 in 2014. But all the blame should not be assigned to AIBA, which remains a morass of dark corners and moral ambiguity. USA Boxing has harmed itself with a litany of internecine squabbles over the years, with various administrators and coaches throwing up their hands and walking away in frustration.

"Right now, I don't know if it's fixable," now-deceased Hall of Fame trainer Emanuel Steward,

A complete shutout was averted (in 2012) only because American women ... came home with a gold and bronze.

2012 gold medalist Claressa Shields (left) will defend her title this summer in Brazil.

brought in as national director of coaching for USA Boxing in the early 2000s, said of the frustration he felt during his brief time on the job. "The international phase of amateur boxing is on its last legs, as far as I can tell. All I can say is that somebody up there must not like it. When I started coaching boxing in 1961, going to the Olympics was everyone's dream. It was my dream to make the Olympic team in 1964. Your first thought was trying to go to the Olympics, then you worried about turning pro afterward."

If the dream dies with potential breakout stars like Hart and Lubin, where will the next Sugar Ray Leonard or Oscar De La Hoya come from? Even Dr. Wu acknowledges that Olympic boxing, like any sport, needs star power to remain relevant in a world where being simply good seldom is good enough.

"You have no brilliant boxer. No star," he said of America's ongoing search for the Next Big Thing. "Once you have one gold medal, two gold medals, everything changes. That is my experience."

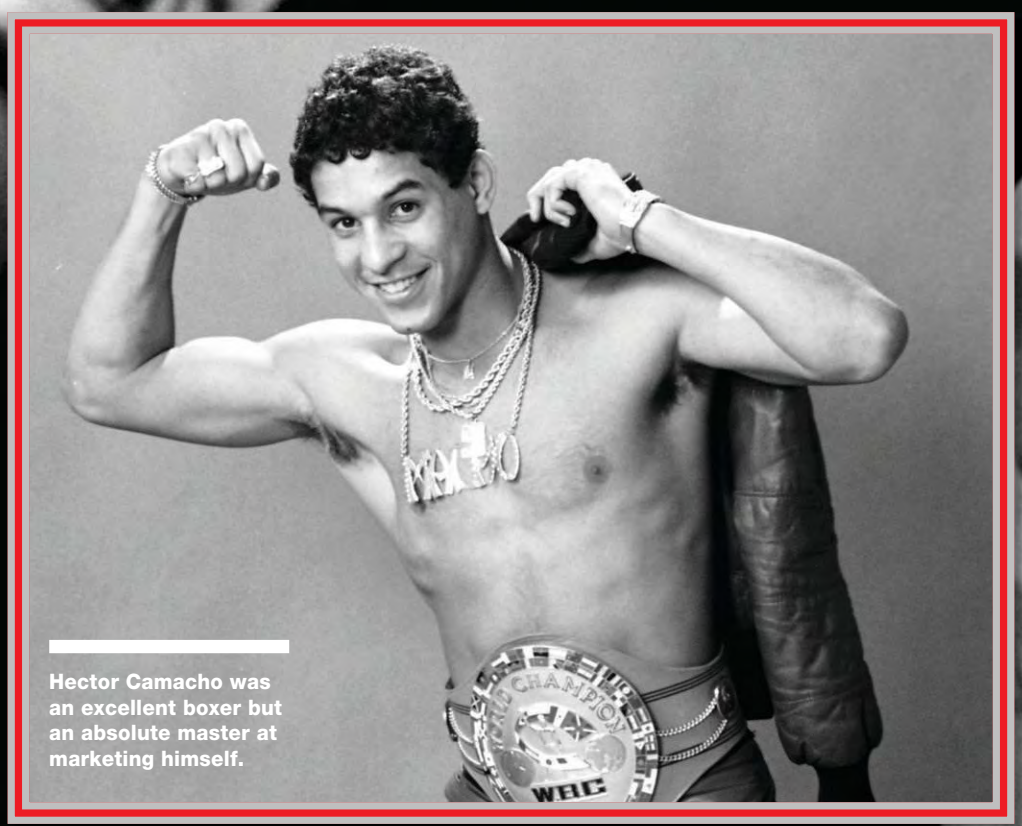
Maybe Cam F. Awesome is the individual to re-light the lamp. Maybe it's flyweight Antonio Vargas, light welterweight Gary Antuanne Russell or lightweight Carlos Balderas. Heck, it might again be middleweight Claressa Shields, who took that solitary gold in London. But it better be somebody, and soon.

HALL OF FAME 2016

STYLE OVER SUBSTANCE?

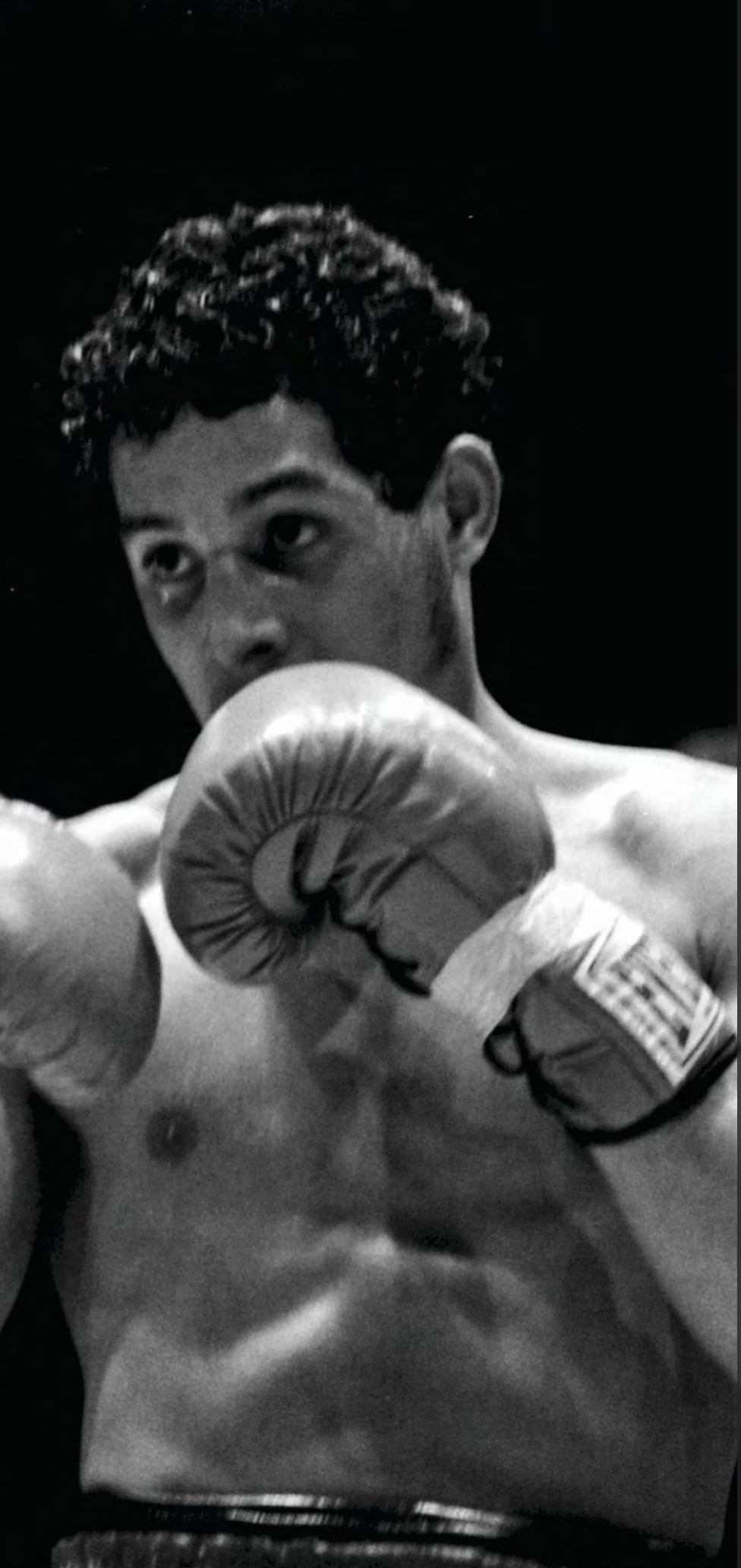
HECTOR CAMACHO HAD ABILITY AND SOME SUCCESS BUT HE'S REMEMBERED MORE FOR HIS FLAMBOYANCE THAN IMPORTANT VICTORIES

By **Don Stradley**



Hector Camacho was an excellent boxer but an absolute master at marketing himself.

THE RING MAGAZINE



Hector Camacho had the tools, that's for sure. He had speed, ring savvy, a difficult southpaw style, a wardrobe that included everything from Darth Vader costumes to Native American war bonnets, and perhaps most memorable of all, a tireless mouth. When he was in a tough bout, he'd still manage to find the television camera between rounds and whisper, in a voice that always had the brightness of a teenager's despite the effects of damaged nasal passages, "It's Macho time!" He'd be getting the worst of it but he still tried to entertain us.

An indefatigable self-promoter, it appears Camacho has self-promoted his way into the International Boxing Hall of Fame's 2016 class. Some approve. Some don't. And that's always been the way with Camacho, a fighter who relished the jeers as well as the cheers. As he once said, "When I make love to my girlfriend, she boos me."

But the fact that Camacho, who was killed in 2012, will be the star of the event even though he won't be there says a lot.

He fought in a fashion that some called "style over substance" – though, certainly, he had some substance – and fought that way for 30 years, regardless of how a large portion of the boxing world held their collective noses at the thought of him. The problem? He didn't like to mix it up. He kept his distance from opponents, thank you very much, moving around the ring as if the canvas was burning his feet and he didn't want to stay in one place for too long. Jab and grab, jab and grab, that was Camacho, causing HBO analyst Larry Merchant to lose patience during Camacho's loss to Oscar De La Hoya. "Camacho is good at selling fights," Merchant said. "And then surviving against top fighters. Period." Then, showing a heretofore unknown power of

clairvoyance, Merchant groused, "Now he'll fight another 20 guys, named Eeny, Meeny, Miny, and Moe, and brag that he's 80-4." Which is, more or less, what happened.

But if many of us grew weary of Camacho, it was because he'd once showed so much promise, back when he was a charismatic kid from Spanish Harlem who became the king of New York, back when he was winning alphabet belts and beating good fighters like Jose Luis Ramirez and "Bazooka" Limon. We'd watched Camacho in those early days with the belief that something special was blooming before us.

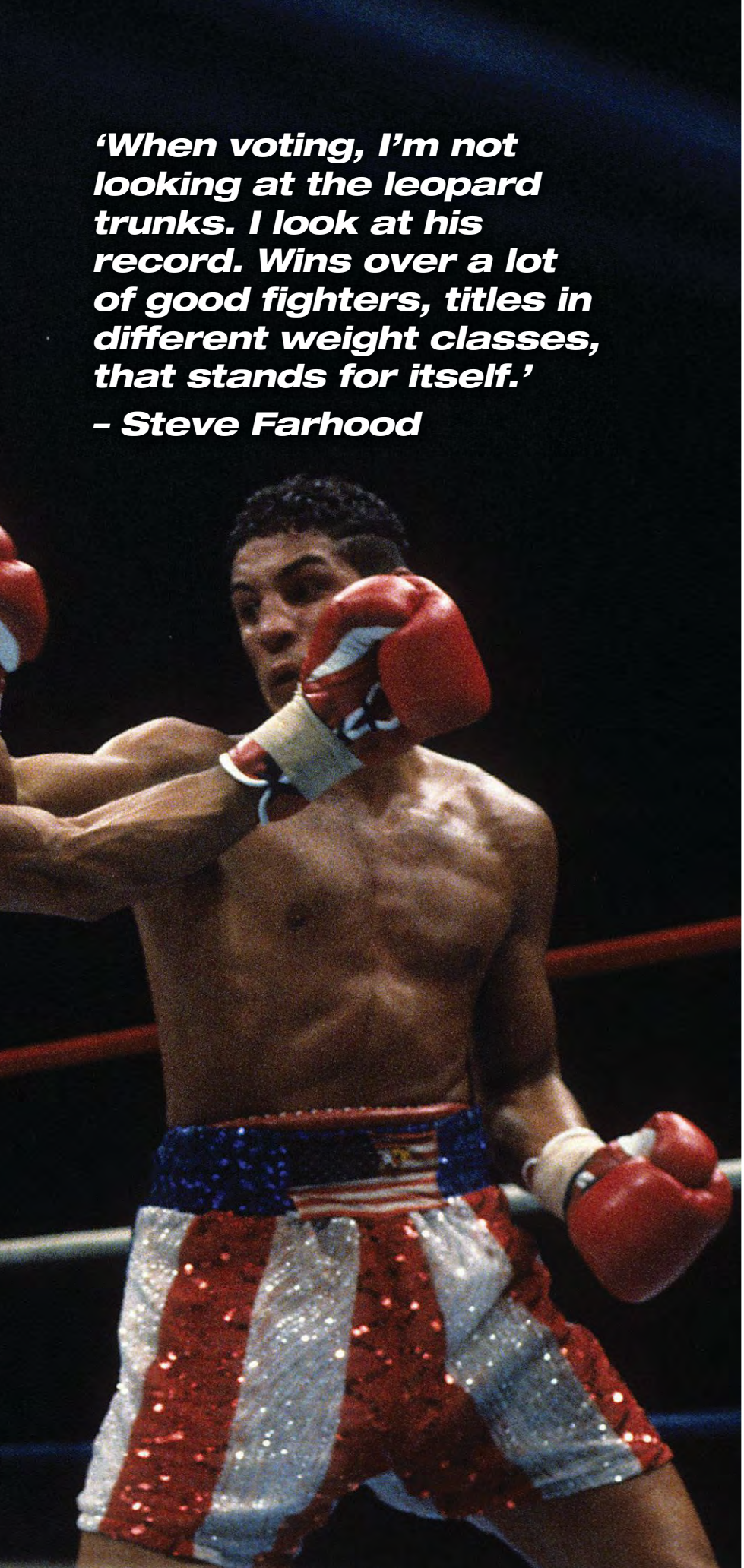
The common wisdom says that the first phase of Camacho's career ended on a June night in 1986, when the headline-grabbing firebrand put his WBC lightweight title on the line against Edwin Rosario at Madison Square Garden. Camacho did his usual pre-fight stuff – taunting Rosario, sending women's panties to his hotel room – but Rosario gave Camacho a serious fight, forcing the brash young titlist to settle for a split decision. Camacho told Sports Illustrated, "I fought a war and I can tell you right now, Hector Camacho don't like no damn wars."

There were some quality wins after that, with Camacho pitching near shutouts against good fighters like Cornelius Boza-Edwards, Howard Davis Jr. and Vinny Pazienza. But by 1992, after splitting a pair with Greg Haugen and then losing a lopsided decision to Julio Cesar Chavez, it appeared the gloss was off of him for good. Camacho's career then fell into a pattern. He'd beat a string of has-beens and journeymen, positioning himself for a big money fight that he'd inevitably lose. Now and then he'd show incredible ring generalship – no one could dictate the pace of a

Some say the first phase of Camacho's career came to an end after a hard-fought split decision over fellow Hall of Famer Edwin Rosario in 1986.

'When voting, I'm not looking at the leopard trunks. I look at his record. Wins over a lot of good fighters, titles in different weight classes, that stands for itself.'

– Steve Farhood



fight like Camacho – and he could surprise you with his gameness, as he did in losing efforts against Chavez, Felix Trinidad, and De La Hoya. But he could also stink a place out like nobody's business. Though he maintained a major following among Puerto Rican fans and enjoyed a reputation in New York as a sort of "people's champion," a guy who was never too busy to say "Wassup?" to a doorman or a cab driver, it was rare to have a conversation about Camacho where the key word wasn't "disappointment."

It's Camacho's self-promotion that most people talk about now. Do we talk about his great fights? Not really. It makes one wonder whether Camacho's wardrobe had more than a little to do with his posthumous Hall of Fame induction.

"When voting, I'm not looking at the leopard trunks," said Showtime analyst and Hall of Fame voter Steve Farhood. "I look at his record. Wins over a lot of good fighters, titles in different weight classes, that stands for itself. Is Camacho an all-time great? No. But the fact that he's viewed as an underachiever tells you that, at one time, we thought he had potential to be one of the great ones. If you saw him in the early days at the Forum in New York, he really gave credence to the philosophy that 'speed is power.' He was lightning fast. People forget, Camacho was must-see TV in the 1980s because of his incredible skill and outrageous behavior. He turned pro in 1980. It was a fantastic time for him because boxing was in a golden age for TV. He was a perfect fit."

Farhood also thinks Camacho gets a bad rap for the Rosario bout.

"I can't think of too many fighters whose career arc is defined by one fight. Yeah, he got shook up in that one but he took beatings from Chavez and De La Hoya and proved to be very tough," he said. "It's ironic. People called him a chicken after he fought Rosario but he turned out to be tough as all hell. What hurt Camacho was a lack of discipline. I

relate his career a bit to Mike Tyson's. They were stars as teenagers. You'd think they might've burned out early or spectacularly but both were survivors. Any fighter like Camacho who relies so much on speed would peak young. Yet he went on to have 80-plus fights, most of them long after the mystique was gone."

After his bout with Rosario, Camacho rarely fought in New York again. Instead, he took advantage of the 1990s casino boom, fighting in gambling venues from Atlantic City to Coconut Creek, Florida. There were wins over aging stars like Ray Leonard and Roberto Duran, wins that meant little to anyone other than Camacho. Once, when his son Hector Jr. was in the early years of his own career, Camacho interrupted his son's post-fight interview to bellow into the camera, "Hey Sugar! Duran! Come get some more!"

Camacho was effectively out of the big time after his 1997 loss to De La Hoya but he fought on, several times per year, still good enough to outbox the washed out pugs thrown before him. He was like a classic rock act on the fairgrounds circuit, still doing it because there wasn't much else he knew how to do.

There was a stab at becoming some sort of reality star on Spanish television – if anyone could give Flavor Flav a run for the money, it was Camacho – but boxing remained his standby. There were 88 bouts in all, of which he won 79. By the end, he was a chunky middleweight, occasionally rising from the canvas to get his win. Remarkably, he was never KO'd. Even when he could barely hoist his leather trunks over his growing gut, Camacho knew how to take care of himself in the ring. Outside the ring was a different story. He developed a serious drug habit and ran with a bad crowd, which lead to his death at 50, killed by a bullet that might or might not have been meant for him. Did his untimely and tragic demise count for a few IBHOF votes? In what many might deem a slow year, without a lot of stars to choose from,

Camacho had his own sense of style and wasn't afraid to flaunt it.

did Camacho benefit from what could be called the "Gatti syndrome"?

"It's not as if he didn't have accomplishments," said Farhood. "You have to judge him by his prime. I think he did enough. It's not a sympathy vote. And his longevity can be taken into consideration, too. And while it's true that Leonard and Duran were well past their primes when Camacho beat them, how many fighters can say they have wins over both Leonard and Duran? And I'll say this: Even if Leonard and Duran were both on the ballot this year, I'd vote for Hector along with them."

Others suggest that if Camacho's wins over Leonard and Duran shouldn't be given much merit, we should also not ride too heavily on his losses.

"The Camacho who fought Oscar De La Hoya, when Hector was a dissipated 35-year-old, was not the wonderful whippet who was so dazzling at 130 and 135 pounds," said Michael Marley, who covered

THE RING MAGAZINE

HALL OF FAME: CLASS OF 2016

MODERN

HECTOR CAMACHO
ACTIVE: 1980-2010
RECORD: 79-6-3 (38 KOs)
BACKGROUND: "Macho" perhaps is best known for flamboyance but make no mistake: The gifted southpaw could fight, particularly in the first half of his career. The three-division world titleholder used an unusual combination of speed and skills to beat an impressive list of quality opponents, including Bazooka Limon, Jose Ramirez, Edwin Rosario, Cornelius Boza-Edwards, Ray Mancini and Vinny Pazienza – all between 1983 and 1990.

LUPE PINTOR
ACTIVE: 1974-95
RECORD: 56-14-2 (42 KOs)
BACKGROUND: Pintor was a swarming action fighter who delighted fans and got results. The product of Mexico City won world titles in two divisions, defeating along the way such respected fighters as Carlos Zarate and Albert Davila. He also gave a prime Wilfredo Gomez all he could handle in a 1982 classic in which he was stopped in 14 rounds, after which his career declined. He made an unsuccessful comeback in the 1990s.

HILARIO ZAPATA
ACTIVE: 1977-93
RECORD: 43-10-1 (14 KOs)
BACKGROUND: The Panamanian couldn't punch but he drove his opponents crazy with his long jab and elusiveness, which served him well: He won titles as both a junior flyweight and flyweight. He outpointed Shigeo Nakajima to win a 108-pound title and successfully defended eight times. Then, after a three-fight second reign at 108, he outpointed Alonzo Gonzalez to win a 112-pound belt and successfully defended five times.

OLD-TIMER

PETEY SARRON
ACTIVE: 1924-39
RECORD: 103-23-12 (25 KOs)
BACKGROUND: The most accomplished fighter ever from Alabama fought the best in an era deep with talent and usually came out on top. His greatest victory came in 1936, when he outpointed fellow Hall of Famer Freddie Miller to win the featherweight title. He went 2-4 against Miller overall, with both wins in championship fights. He lost his belt to the great Henry Armstrong (by sixth-round knockout) in 1937.

NON-PARTICIPANT

WHITEY ESNEAULT
POSITION: Trainer
BACKGROUND: "Mr. Whitey" imparted his mastery of the fundamentals out of his New Orleans gym for a half century. He worked with Ralph Dupas and Willie Pastrano, among many others.

HAROLD LEDERMAN
POSITION: Judge/broadcaster
BACKGROUND: Lederman was a respected judge out of New York, working more than 100 title fights, before becoming HBO's popular "unofficial" judge on countless broadcasts.

MARK RATNER
POSITION: Official
BACKGROUND: Ratner was the longtime executive director of the Nevada State Athletic Commission, where he gained a reputation for competence and integrity.

OBSERVER

JERRY IZENBERG
POSITION: Writer
BACKGROUND: The longtime columnist with the Newark Star-Ledger and author of 10 books retired in 2007 as one of the top sports writers in the United States.

COL. BOB SHERIDAN
POSITION: Broadcaster
BACKGROUND: Sheridan found his niche as the lead voice on international broadcasts, adding excitement to every card he worked with his passion and energy.

boxing for the New York Post during Camacho's heyday. As for Camacho belonging in Canastota, Marley doesn't hedge for a second. "My answer is an unwavering, emphatic yes, he does."

Marley admits that Camacho's later career was "of little distinction" but feels Camacho's early days were enough to merit enshrinement. "Putting aside his fashion flair and his braggadocio, (Camacho) was often very good in major fights," Marley said.

Still, it seems that Camacho's legacy will be his personality. His ring walks, usually the highlight of the night, were unprecedented. Would we have had Bernard Hopkins' executioner or alien mask, Naseem Hamed's flying carpet ride, Floyd Mayweather's chinchilla trunks, Tyson Fury's Batman costume, Deontay Wilder's bronze faceplate or Adrien Broner's silly gyrations if Camacho hadn't been there first? For better or worse, Camacho made a contribution to the business. It involved that most unlikely trait for a boxer: playfulness.

"I knew him pretty well," said Farhood. "He loved to have fun, outside and inside the ring. When it stopped being fun, we could see it in him." "Camacho," added Marley, "was impossible to dislike."

Camacho was no doubt helped by the fact that many of the IBHOF voters came of age during his career. He may have reminded them of better days, a factor which probably helped Ray Mancini – a Camacho victim – with his own induction last year.

As he often does, IBHOF head Ed Brophy put Camacho's induction into a simple perspective recently. "Camacho is part of boxing history and that's what the International Boxing Hall of Fame is about," Brophy said.

A history maker? Camacho? Not exactly. But Hector Camacho had star power. He turned a simple ring walk into a party. He never looked like a guy on his way to a fight. He was on his way to a good time. For a while, we all had a good time with him.

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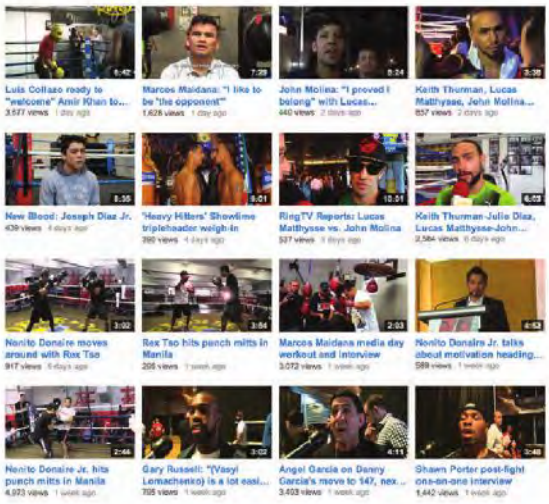

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Tyson Fury (pictured with his new RING belt) believes Wladimir Klitschko will try to knock him out in their rematch.

'I'VE ACCOMPLISHED MY DREAM'

TYSON FURY REVELS IN HIS RING TITLE AS HE LOOKS FORWARD TO THE REMATCH

By **Gareth A Davies**

Tyson Fury reckoned it may never get better for him professionally than the presentation of his belt from the "Bible of Boxing," THE RING Magazine, which defines the 6-foot-9 Englishman as the No. 1 heavyweight in the world. It is Fury's 12th title belt – major and minor – in an undefeated career.

Reason being that Fury knows it will be hard to ever replicate his feat of defeating a super champion on Nov. 28 in Dusseldorf, Germany. He's probably right. The pinnacle of his career will be rubber-stamped as that night and remain etched into history. And in the course of his career, he will likely never see another super champion in the division. It was certainly a history-making, form-bending moment as Wladimir Klitschko was usurped as the ruler.

"I always said THE RING Magazine belt hashtags you as No. 1 in the division. Not anybody gets THE RING Magazine belt and I'm honored to be given it ... no ... I've won it. I've never been given anything in my life," Fury told a gathering of boxing correspondents and television and radio reporters in the dining hall of an art-deco hotel in Morecambe, his hometown, looking out onto the Irish Sea.

"I rank this belt above all the other belts. I've always said I wanted to be RING Magazine heavyweight champion of the world and now I am. I've accomplished my dream." It is clearly the full stop to this chapter of his career.

Fury will fight Klitschko again, of course, once the terms, date and venue are agreed upon. It is imminent, too.

"It's going to be a great fight," Fury said. "Klitschko has got a point to prove. I think he is going to come to try and knock me out this time. He knows he can't outbox me because I outboxed him quite comfortably in the last fight. So he knows he has to knock me out. In order to do that he has to plant his feet and try and land some heavy

punches. When he does that, it leaves him wide open for the counter to get knocked out himself. I think it is not going to go the distance this time. Either he knocks me out or I knock him out. Simple."

Fury added: "He has got to try and (come out of his shell) if he is going to try and redeem himself and go on for a bit longer. Is he going to go out with a last hurrah and a bang or is he just going to go out jabbing and grabbing again?"

History has not been lost on Fury, either, when it comes to the RING heavyweight title. Fury cites 1985 and 1986.

"If you look back in boxing history, you saw Larry Holmes and Michael Spinks fight," he said. "A lot of people think Larry Holmes won both fights but I have watched them and analyzed them quite a few times and I think Spinks outlanded him on shots and was more active. (Spinks) boxed, outboxed him. Second time, same thing. Holmes didn't really change his style.

"Is Klitschko going to come out swinging, which we have never seen Klitschko do? He never changes his style. Does he get a new trainer in? Does he keep Johnathon Banks? It's really irrelevant. I've beaten him once, I will beat him again."

Fury also talked about the future. "(Deontay) Wilder is definitely a fight I want. I'm not a guy to hang around and defend against 25 bums. Although Wilder didn't look exceptional against that Polish kid (Artur Szpilka), he was an awkward southpaw. (Szpilka) was trying to steal shots and get out of the way. He then got caught and got planted to the canvas. Wilder is a dangerous puncher, he is a learning fighter. He didn't have a long amateur career. That is why he is learning as a professional and has had so many professional fights. He is getting better all the time. The crowd are not bothered by who he fights. They just come to see someone get laid out. I think they are doing a good job with him, Lou DiBella and his adviser Al Haymon."

Fury also revealed that an unnamed Middle Eastern sheikh made an unusual offer for the rematch with Klitschko. The sheikh was prepared to put up $120 million to host it on board a luxury super yacht.

"There was a sheikh in Dubai who owned a yacht which would fit only 120 people on," Fury said. "He didn't want to broadcast the fight anywhere and he said he could sell 120 tickets at $1 million each so that would have been $120 million. He wanted to have an exclusive heavyweight championship of the world fight with no TV station, with just those 120 people watching. He didn't say how much I would get but I probably would have had the biggest half of the $120 million – so I was all for it. I don't think it's possible now but it would have been an epic story." One of boxing's more bizarre promotional offers.

For the record, Fury was the fifth British boxer to win the RING belt (see accompanying graphic).

U.K. CHAMPS

The five British fighters to hold a RING Magazine title since it reinstituted championships in 2002 (including reign and how they won and lost it).

LENNOX LEWIS
Reign: 2002-04
Division: heavyweight
How won / lost it: Awarded title before fighting Mike Tyson / retired.

RICKY HATTON
Reign: 2005-09
Division: Junior welterweight
How won / lost it: Defeated Kostya Tszyu / lost to Manny Pacquiao.

JOE CALZAGHE
Reign: 2006-08
Division: Super middleweight
How won / lost it: Defeated Jeff Lacy for vacant title / vacated.

DAVID HAYE
Reign: 2007-08
Division: Cruiserweight
How won / lost it: Defeated Jean-Marc Mormeck / vacated.

CALZAGHE
Reign: 2008-09
Division: Light heavyweight
How won / lost it: Defeated Bernard Hopkins / retired.

TYSON FURY
Reign: 2015-present
Division: Heavyweight
How won it: Defeated Wladimir Klitschko.

JOE GALLAGHER

There were two other men from British boxing who were delighted to be recognized by this publication, trainer Joe Gallagher and lightweight boxer Anthony Crolla.

Gallagher, the 47-year-old Mancunian who grew up in the deprived Benchill Estate in Wythenshawe ("without a pot to piss in, in a no-go area," he explained), was shocked to be named RING Trainer of the Year. He admitted that he is "married to boxing." His award was augmented when his fighter, Crolla, was named Most Inspirational for battling back from a fractured skull – incurred when he tried to stop a burglary at a neighbor's home – to claim a world title in November. The dedicated coach spoke to me one evening just after he had just

closed the gym in Bolton. He cares deeply about the 10 fighters whom he trains.

"You're like a priest to them, a talisman to them, a father to them, a friend to them. You cajole, teach, and grow very close to your fighters. You're playing many roles, including psychologist," Gallagher said.

Joe Gallagher is as humble as they come.

It's one of the reasons, he says, that he has refused to take anywhere near the cut that some trainers and managers have taken historically. "The idea of getting a 25- to 50-percent cut from their earnings seems ridiculous to me. All I want is enough to get by. It's a dream come true every day that I'm in this job, whether it's seeing my kids to the pinnacle of success or getting up at 4 in the morning to go for a run with them. It has to be about them because this is a sport in which they can be legally killed and they are the ones taking the punches. Those two facts are never far from my mind."

AMIR KHAN

The biggest shock of the year thus far was Amir Khan's fast deal to fight Canelo Alvarez at 155 pounds on May 7 in Las Vegas, with the RING and WBC middleweight titles on the line. Khan says he took the fight "in a heartbeat." It meant Khan rejected a fight against British rival Kell Brook, with promoter Eddie Hearn claiming that he had offered Khan $10 million for a June 4 date at Wembley Stadium.

Amir Khan faces a stiff challenge on May 7.

In many ways, Alvarez is a much tougher assignment than the Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Manny Pacquiao fights Khan craved. Khan will fight a Mexican bulldozer likely to be 10 to 15 pounds heavier than him on Cinco De Mayo weekend in Las Vegas. I see this as a very, very hard fight for Khan, with his speed against Canelo's power and all-around ability. Only Mayweather outskilled the youngster. For Khan, it will be a mammoth task, a risk-and-reward fight. He has said that he will build himself up physically for this contest, training up to 160 pounds in weight. The downside is that boxers are unable to build muscle on their chins. And Canelo, once warmed up, throws great combinations – as well as body shots – which could be the Briton's downfall.

It will be seen by many as a precursor to a meeting in September between Alvarez and Gennady Golovkin.

But this does afford an unmistakable opportunity for Khan to put himself back on the map in a big way. Conversely, it could wreck him. Nonetheless, the British fighter insists that he will "shock the world" and that Alvarez will bring out the best in him. It is a genuinely thrilling prospect, though to get through 12 rounds against the Mexican will see Khan's movement and defensive skills sorely tested. Oscar De La Hoya explained the moment the promotional light bulb went off in his head: "What Amir Khan and Canelo are doing on May 7 is taking boxing back to the roots of what this game should be and that's fighting for pride, fighting for history. It's not about fighting for the money or the business."

De La Hoya continued: "One thing about Amir Khan is that he wants to prove to the world that he really is the best. That's what boxing was when I was fighting and when Mike Tyson was fighting and when Muhammad Ali was fighting. When Mayweather retired, the reason I said I was happy was because now boxing can go back to the roots of the game."

We all know that this will be Khan's hardest fight, bar none, yet he has to be applauded for having serious *cojones* for taking it.

TOP 10

1. AMIR KHAN
2. TYSON FURY
3. KELL BROOK
4. LEE SELBY
5. CARL FRAMPTON
6. JAMES DEGALE
7. SCOTT QUIGG
8. JAMIE MCDONNELL
9. BILLY JOE SAUNDERS
10. CALLUM SMITH

11-15: Liam Smith, Tony Bellew, Terry Flanagan, Chris Eubank Jr., Anthony Crolla

Through fights of Feb. 7, 2016

Gareth A Davies is boxing correspondent for The Telegraph, London.

BEST OF DOUGIE'S MAILBAG

EXCERPTS FROM THE **RINGTV.COM** EDITOR'S POPULAR COLUMN By **Doug Fischer**

Since 2001, RingTV.com Editor Doug Fischer has held an ongoing dialog – which occasionally becomes heated debate – with boxing fans from around the world in "Dougie's Mailbag."

The following excerpts are from the Feb. 1, 5 and 8 editions of the Monday and Friday mailbags.

MICHAEL, from the Isle of Man, views the Canelo Alvarez-Amir Khan middleweight fight as an interesting style matchup, one that reminds him "a little" of the classic Marvin Hagler-Ray Leonard showdown. Says Michael: "I can see Canelo trying to cut off the ring, push Khan against the ropes, go for the inside to slow him down, etc., whereas I can see Khan using his footwork, his jab, obviously his hand speed, keeping on the outside and seriously going for a flurry of punches in the last minute of each round to try and impress the judges." Michael also believes that Khan has "shown Kell Brook and Eddie Hearn up" by taking the fight with Alvarez, especially sticking it to Hearn, who told Khan "who else can you fight for this kind of money?"

DOUGIE'S REPLY: Khan wanted a mega-fight with Floyd Mayweather Jr. or Manny Pacquiao and couldn't land either future Hall of Famer. Alvarez is the next best thing in terms of a high-profile, high-paying opponent. The Mexican star isn't a future Hall of Famer (yet) but he might be the biggest draw in boxing while Mayweather is pretending to be retired. Khan is going to go for the money and history (due to the RING and WBC titles being on the line) vs. Canelo. If he fails, I think he believes that he can still do the Brook fight (and it probably would be a big event in the U.K. provided Brook remains IBF welterweight titleholder and Khan doesn't get blown out by Canelo).

I hadn't thought of the Hagler-Leonard comparison to Canelo-Khan. I think Khan would do well to take a page from Leonard's playbook and, lucky for him, Canelo doesn't press as much as Hagler did. However, even though Canelo is more stationary than the Marvelous One, he might have more head- and upper-body movement than the 1987 version of the middleweight king. It will be interesting to see whether Canelo is a sharp-enough shooter to counterpunch a stick-and-moving Khan.

Amir Khan will be well prepared.

NIKKI, from Darlington, U.K., views Khan as a decided underdog against Alvarez, as many fans do, but adds that the former junior welterweight titleholder has "a decent chance" to pull off the upset as long as he can "protect his whiskers" from the Mexican star.

DOUGIE'S REPLY: I think as the May 7 event gets closer Khan will gain more believers, including fans (like you) who generally don't care for him. Part of the belief in Khan's chances will be the usual hate that Canelo attracts (the redhead rubs some folks the wrong way, including a rather large contingent of Mexican fans and industry insiders). Part of it will just be sympathy for a very gutsy – and some believe very delusional – underdog. But part of it will also come from close study of the natural abilities, styles and resumes of both fighters.

Canelo has faced his share of name fighters but he hasn't faced many with Khan's experience and talent level that are also still in their athletic prime. The only boxers Canelo has faced with Khan's level of talent (I'm talking about athleticism and raw boxing ability, not technique) and elite amateur background are Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Erislandy Lara. Canelo was soundly outpointed by Mayweather and he was fortunate to get a split nod against Lara in a very close fight. Khan doesn't have Mayweather's technique or defensive prowess, he doesn't have Lara's size and his chin isn't as solid as either boxer, but he's arguably faster and more mobile. He's also busier, which could work against him.

Canelo has physically overwhelmed his share of undersized opponents, including Matthew Hatton, Josesito Lopez and Alfonso Gomez. However, those fighters lacked Khan's talent, extensive amateur background and championship experience.

Anyway, we don't need to channel the spirit of Eddie Futch to realize all of this. Virgil Hunter knows what he has in Khan, as well as a thing or two about boxing, and I'm sure he will devise a game plan that will maximize the considerable tools Khan brings to the matchup while minimizing his fighter's glaring Achilles heel – those shaky "whiskers."

SEAN, from Washington state, recently watched the first fight between Joe Louis and Billy Conn and says he couldn't help but think of how

JOHNSON: AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES; PACQUIAO: JOHN GURZINSKI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Canelo-Khan might play out the same way. Says Sean: "The young, plucky kid outweighed by 30 pounds by one of the best punchers in the game outboxes the champ and, on the verge of an historic upset, gets his Irish up and gets (knocked out)." He asked Fischer about his thoughts on that comparison/breakdown, as well as a "Mythical Matchup" between Joe Gans and Benny Leonard.

DOUGIE'S REPLY: I'm not saying Canelo belongs in the same sentence as Louis or that Khan can carry Conn's jockstrap but I can envision a scenario similar to what happened in the world heavyweight title bout that took place on June 18, 1941.

Canelo Alvarez has overwhelmed smaller foes.

Khan's not Irish but that Pakistani pride is no joke. If Khan could have kept it in check during the Danny Garcia fight, I think he could have chopped the heavy-handed Philadelphian down to a late stoppage.

Two things to keep in mind: Canelo's trainers won't offend Khan the way Angel Garcia did (and quite brilliantly so) during the build-up to the fight. And while Canelo is flat-footed the way Louis was, he doesn't have the one-hitter-quitter punching power the Brown Bomber possessed. And, of course, Khan doesn't have Conn's solid chin.

Leonard wins your Mythical Matchup of all-time great lightweight champs by close decision. It would have been a hotly contested chess match between two ultimate masters of defense and technical offense.

OMAR, from Paterson, New Jersey, is worried about Amir Khan being a poor tune-up for Alvarez to prepare for an eventual showdown with Gennady Golovkin. Says Omar: "It makes me believe (Golden Boy Promotions) is not interested in making (Canelo-Golovkin) after all but let's see."

DOUGIE'S REPLY: It's obviously not a tune-up for GGG. It's a pay-per-view event that GBP can sell in the U.S. and the UK. GBP could have gone with Canelo-Rosado or Canelo vs. a tough solid middleweight like Hassan N'Dam – matchups that would have given us a better idea of how well the former junior middleweight can hang in the 160-pound division – but those aren't high-profile fights (and certainly aren't pay-per-view events). But just because Canelo and GBP want to stage a PPV event in May doesn't mean they "aren't interested" in doing business with GGG.

TABRAZE, from London, says Khan has "the speed, skill, engine, etc., to out-hustle Canelo." But he adds, "Miguel Cotto was landing and didn't make a dent. If Khan has the same problem, it's gonna be a long night for the man from Bolton."

DOUGIE'S REPLY: I'm glad you brought up Cotto in your brief analysis of Canelo-Khan. Most fans and media thought Canelo would overwhelm the Puerto Rican veteran at some point during their fight. However, by utilizing a stick-and-move strategy Cotto was able to go the distance, limit the punishment he took and do well enough to earn a draw in the minds of some observers. I think Khan, who is taller, rangier and faster than Cotto, can employ the punch-on-the-fly game a lot more effectively against Canelo, who has trouble with lateral movement.

You mentioned that Cotto was unable to hurt Canelo. That's true but keep in mind two things: 1. Cotto never really tried to sit down on his punches and check Canelo's chin, and 2. If Khan is smart, he won't try to either.

Damon Allen Jr. has a high boxing IQ.

DAMON ALLEN JR.

THE PHILADELPHIAN HAS THE BACKING – AND REGULAR ADVICE – OF THOSE CLOSEST TO HIM

By **Mitch Abramson**

If Damon Allen Jr. doesn't become a world champion or a star in the sport, it won't be for a lack of trying. Or a lack of family support. Or due to his mother allowing him to eat sweets.

The undefeated lightweight from Southwest Philadelphia couldn't get away from boxing if he tried.

His mom, Rasheeda Gantz, is a boxing judge for USA Boxing. His dad, Damon Allen Sr., is his trainer. His great-grandfather, Mitchell Allen Sr., runs the gym – the Mitchell Allen Boxing Club in West Philadelphia – at which he trains.

And his cousin Hank Lundy, who was slated to face Terence Crawford on Feb. 27 when this issue went to press, is a mentor and frequent sparring partner.

Allen (8-0, 3 knockouts) receives regular career advice from all of the above.

"Dinner conversation gets heated," said the 23-year-old, who still lives at home, where the conversation rarely deviates from the sweet science. "My great-grandfather, his dream was for me was to make the Olympics. That's all he talks about, 'You should have won the Olympics.'"

Allen lost in the 2012 U.S. Olympic Team Trials and turned pro a year later, after nearly 200 amateur fights in which he honed his impressive boxing skills. He estimates he finished 180-11.

"In the pro game I want to win a world title so I can prove to him that even though I didn't make the Olympics I still won a world title. I got to prove something to him," said Allen, a Golden Boy Promotions fighter who will make his 2016 debut on the undercard of Luis Ortiz-Tony Thompson on March 5 in Washington, D.C.

In fact, Damon Jr. focuses on boxing so much that his father used to think it might be a little

Allen's trainers are trying to get him to sit down on his punches.

THE ESSENTIALS
Damon Allen Jr.

Age: 23

Weight class: Lightweight

Height: 5 feet 8 inches

Stance: Orthodox

Hometown: Philadelphia

Record: 8-0 (3 KOs)

Biggest strengths: High boxing IQ. ★ Goes to the body well. ★ Comes from a boxing family. Grew up sparring junior welterweight contender and cousin Hank Lundy.

Biggest question marks: Undeveloped power. ★ Getting him to sit down on his punches.

unhealthy.

"Sometimes he puts too much pressure on himself," Damon Sr. said. "I have to slow him down sometimes. We just try to keep it fun for him sometimes because he wants to prove so much to everybody that sometimes it takes the fun out of it."

And he sees his son evolving.

"He's slowing down and having fun more," Damon Sr. said. "He's just real talented. Now he's just sitting back and having fun."

"Baby Dame" (the family name for Damon Jr.) hopes to fight six times in what he expects to be a special year.

"I see the year 2016 as my breakout year," he said.

And if that happens, his family will be there to do what families do best: cheer him on and offer plenty of suggestions.

"It's never a dull moment," Allen said with a laugh. "My mom is lecturing me on boxing. My dad is lecturing me on boxing. I eat a piece of candy and my mom is lecturing me on how it's not good for my body. I love boxing and everyone in my family loves boxing." RING

3 MORE TO WATCH

CHRIS COLBERT
FEATHERWEIGHT
(4-0, 2 KOs)

Colbert is a slick boxer-puncher from Brooklyn who is still in high school and is signed with Al Haymon. He is affectionately known as "B-Hop" because of his friendship with ring legend Bernard Hopkins. He was a nationally ranked amateur who's good at adjusting to his opponents in the ring.

JUNIOR YOUNAN
SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT
(7-0, 6 KOs)

Younan has been hyped for some time now. A former youth amateur star, Younan elected to skip the senior ranks to turn professional in 2013. Blessed with fast hands and confidence bordering on brash, he's hoping to break out in 2016 as part of the Roc Nation stable.

JULIAN RODRIGUEZ
JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT
(11-0, 9 KOs)

Rodriguez has maintained a brisk pace in his career, fighting three times last year and six times in 2014. The New Jersey resident, a Top Rank fighter, has fast hands and an aggressive style and has started to increase his level of competition.

TURNING UP 'THE HEAT'

HEATHER HARDY IS LOOKING TO TURN HER HOMETOWN SUCCESS INTO PRIMETIME POWER

By **Thomas Gerbasi**

Two years ago, Heather Hardy was happy just to be in boxing. Back then, the sport was one way a single mother could improve her lot. And she had some success. With a 6-0 record and a growing buzz around the New York City area, the Brooklyn native was starting to get attention.

Now her sights are set much higher. The more-accomplished 34-year-old junior featherweight isn't going to stop until she becomes a major attraction, even if the old guard in boxing insists upon placing obstacles in front of "The Heat" and the other female boxers in the United States.

"I was at a point where I was just grateful to be mentioned, grateful to be on these undercards and grateful to be doing what I was doing," said Hardy, now 15-0 (three knockouts). "Now that I'm seasoned and experienced and have the resume that some of these top

Heather Hardy envisions herself as a TV attraction.

fighters have, I don't know why people in the business think I should still be grateful to be here. I have a good resume, sold over $100,000 in tickets last year, so where is the fairness?"

Let's just say fairness has never been a part of the fight game. But without some loud voices, change will never come about and Hardy, as a true New Yorker, is not shy about sharing her opinion.

Forget the fact that she has an engaging personality and fights as if she has been mugged "and I have two minutes to get my wallet back." What will take Hardy to the next level (read: television bout) is the fact that her raw aggression is now enhanced by technique and experience that will soon allow her to compete with the best at 122 pounds.

"That's the difference between me now and me then," she said. "Then, I had confidence because I knew I wouldn't let anyone break me. Now I'm learning to fight and understanding boxing and movement. To be educated and not afraid, that's dangerous."

She's getting that education daily in the storied Gleason's Gym under the tutelage of coach Devon Cormack, whose sister, Alicia Ashley, is a world champion currently on THE RING's pound-for-pound list. Cormack minces no words when it comes to Hardy, telling her bluntly, "My sister is in this gym and she is the best in this weight class, and until you feel you can beat her, you should not be out there screaming you're a world champion."

Hardy doesn't dispute that statement.

"He's right," she said. "I know, and everyone in the community knows, who the legitimate champions are. And I feel that until I can step up and feel like I can go toe-to-toe with those girls, I don't deserve a world title."

She will likely get a shot in 2016. And working with the likes of Ashley, Amanda and Cindy Serrano, Ronica Jeffrey, Melissa St. Vil, Keisher McLeod Wells and Sonya Lamonakis, Hardy is surrounded by world-class competitors, making that transition to the big leagues a bit easier.

Female boxers haven't enjoyed television exposure in years, which means Hardy is thinking big. She thinks her promoter, Lou DiBella, can make it happen, though, especially since he has now signed Hardy's heated (pardon the pun) rival, Shelito Vincent.

"It's gonna happen," Hardy said. "There was so much talk for two years but the talk was really nonsense because she was signed with CES and the fight could never happen. It was easy for her to say 'Heather is afraid' because the promoters were not willing to sacrifice the ticket sales. So Lou signed her to make sure the fight can happen. And I think we've both built up our records and our resumes, we are proven ticket-sellers and we've got all the makings of a TV fight."

Indeed, as perhaps the most visible American female boxer competing today, Hardy has all the makings of a TV fighter. Once you see her fight and hear her story, that will become clear. All she wants is a chance.

"When it comes to goals, I've kind of transitioned," she said. "My goal isn't just to win a world title; I don't want to just beat everybody up. That's still there but I want to leave my mark. I want to rip that door open for females in the future and leave it wide open. It's good to reflect and see how far I've come. And sometimes I might see a picture or read an article and go 'wow' and it takes me away but there's still so much more to go. And if I'm satisfied with just having this, it's almost like I started for nothing."

WOMEN'S POUND FOR POUND

1. CECILIA BRAEKHUS
Norway • 27-0 (7 KOs)
Welterweight

2. DELFINE PERSOON
Belgium • 35-1 (16 KOs)
Lightweight

3. JACKIE NAVA
Mexico • 32-4-3 (14 KOs)
Junior featherweight

4. JELENA MRDJENOVICH
Canada • 35-10-1 (19 KOS)
Featherweight

5. JESSICA CHAVEZ
Mexico • 24-4-3 (4 KOs)
Flyweight

6. LAYLA MCCARTER
U.S. • 36-13-5 (8 KOs)
Lightweight

7. ERICA ANABELLA FARIAS
Argentina • 22-1 (10 KOs)
Junior welterweight

8. IBETH ZAMORA SILVA
Mexico • 24-5 (9 KOs)
Junior flyweight

9. ALICIA ASHLEY
U.S. • 23-10-1 (4 KOS)
Junior featherweight

10. EDITH SOLEDAD MATTHYSSE
ARGENTINA • 14-7-1 (1 KO)
Featherweight

Through fights of Feb. 7, 2016

Torono
BOMBER
SZPILA
BRONZE

The capable Artur Szpilka gave Deontay Wilder some problems but ultimately couldn't withstand the American's power.

NAOKI FUKUDA

RINGSIDE REPORTS

BY NORM FRAUENHEIM

DEONTAY WILDER KO 9 ARTUR SZPILKA

Date: Jan. 16
Site: Barclays Center, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Division: Heavyweight
Weights: Wilder 228.75 pounds, Szpilka 233.25
RING ratings (before fight): Wilder No. 2, Szpilka not rated
Network: Showtime

It's hard to know who's who and what's what in a waiting room crowded with heavyweights who have gathered, some with a belt and all with a claim, in the weeks since Wladimir Klitschko's loss turned the division upside down. From crown prince to clown prince, everybody is an heir apparent. Just ask them. But not everybody has Deontay Wilder's power.

Wilder's right hand continues to be his signature, the bottom line, in every fight but one. Thirty-five stoppages in 36 victories add up to a pretty powerful claim.

"I haven't met a man who can stand my right hand," Wilder said on his Twitter account.

Artur Szpilka (20-2, 15 KOs) sure couldn't. Wilder, who injured his right in a 2015 victory over Bermane Stiverne for the WBC title in the only decision on his perfect record, said before the opening bell that the hand had finally healed. The hand, he said, could again withstand what few have.

With 36 seconds left in the ninth round, it landed with all of its promised power in frightening fashion, dropping Szpilka onto his back where he stayed motionless and unconscious until a medical crew strapped the Polish fighter onto a stretcher and carried him to the closest emergency room.

Wilder didn't celebrate. The heavyweight, a dad known for taking care of a daughter born with spina bifida, went over to Szpilka and made sure he was OK. He was, said his trainer, Ronnie Shields.

"I don't want to hurt a man so he can't go home to his family," Wilder said after his biggest knockout since a first-round stoppage of former beltholder Sergei Liakhovich in 2013. "We risk our lives every time we step in the ring. He's definitely in my prayers. I hope he's doing well."

Scary power and fatherly concern are an intriguing mix. It's what makes Wilder so likable. He could be a marketable, fan-friendly heavyweight. A People's Champ. But there's skepticism about his overall ring skill, especially now that the 30-year-old begins a stage of his career that includes fighters with more experience and perhaps know-how that could neutralize his right hand.

"Last year I became A champion, this year I will become THE champion," he said in another tweet.

That could mean facing WBC mandatory challenger Alexander Povetkin, a Russian whose accomplished resume includes an Olympic gold medal, before meeting Tyson Fury, who upset Klitschko and will face him again in an immediate rematch. If Fury fails to pull off the encore, then it could mean a resurrected Klitschko against Wilder, his former sparring partner.

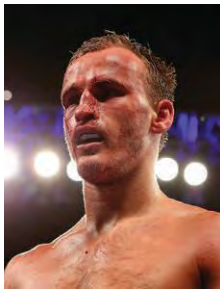
It's no coincidence that Povetkin and Fury were in a Barclays Center crowd that included Mike Tyson and Lennox Lewis. Fury made sure that nobody missed him. Ever the showman, he climbed into the ring and confronted Wilder, telling him that he'd fight him "any time, any place, anywhere … after I beat Klitschko again."

Wilder smiled.

"Prance around all you want," Wilder said. "We ain't afraid of you."

So far, he and that right hand create a powerful pair. A "we" to fear.

WORLDWIDE RESULTS— Go to: bit.ly/worldwide-results or scan the QR code to see weekly fight results at RingTV.com.



NO. 7 EVGENY GRADOVICH MD 10 JESUS GALICIA

Jan. 9, Picanya, Spain (Match TV-Russia)

There are a lot of belts on the championship rack but some just don't fit. Evgeny Gradovich found that out during a trip to Spain.

The former 126-pound champ wanted to see if he could get down to 122 pounds for a possible shot at Nonito Donaire's WBO title. Forget it. Gradovich (21-1-1, 9 KOs) discovered that not even Jenny Craig could get him down to junior featherweight.

He came in at 128 for his majority decision over the tough Jesus Galicia (13-9-1, 8 KOs), who tested the Russian early but lost a 99-93, 96-94, 96-96 decision.

The Donaire possibility vanished. Instead, Gradovich, who has been at 126 and 130 throughout his career, will face Oscar Valdez on April 9 in a bout that could say something about who is the better fit for the top of the featherweight division.

CHARLES MARTIN TKO 3 NO. 7 VYACHESLAV GLAZKOV

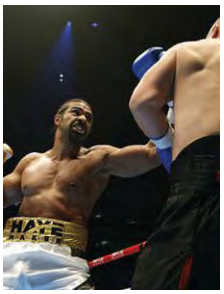
Jan 16, Brooklyn, N.Y. (Showtime)

Opportunities are like empty seats in a game of musical chairs since Tyson Fury's upset of Wladimir Klitschko. A scrum has gathered to fill the few that appear and will probably re-appear.

Contenders, wannabes, Charles Martin and Vyacheslav Glazkov began the dance for a title left vacant when the IBF stripped Fury of its version.

Martin (23-0-1, 21 KOs) wound up in the empty seat. It's how he got there that has a lot of heavyweights thinking that it could have just as easily been them. Glazkov (21-1-1, 13 KOs) suffered a basketball injury in the fast break; he blew out his right knee in a bizarre twist that ended the fight at 1:50 of the third round.

What's next? Martin-David Haye was mentioned. Here's the kicker: Haye blamed a toe injury for a 2011 loss to Klitschko.



DAVID HAYE TKO 1 MARK DE MORI

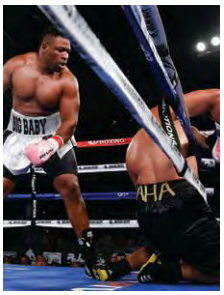
Jan. 16, London (UKTV's Dave)

A lengthening line of heavyweight hopefuls includes some we're just getting to know and few we almost forgot. Put David Haye in the latter category.

He's back, dipping his infamous toe in heavyweight waters for his first fight since retiring in 2013 after undergoing shoulder surgery.

Haye's re-introduction was brief: 131 seconds. That's how long it took him to stop Mark De Mori, an Aussie who reportedly learned how to box in Perth by watching YouTube. It looks as if De Mori (30-2-2, 26 KOs) didn't watch much defense. His hands were down, allowing Haye (27-2, 25 KOs) to land a right that finished him at 2:11 of the first round.

Next up for Haye, scheduled for May 21 in London? Hopefully someone who tells us whether Haye's comeback will be worth remembering.



JARRELL MILLER TKO 7 DONOVAN DENNIS

Jan. 22, Tucson, Ariz. (Showtime)

Jarrell Miller's nickname suggests he has a lot of growing up to do. Big Baby's heavyweight career is still in its infancy.

But a step toward fulfilling Miller's potential and boasts was taken against the tough Donovan Dennis in a dramatic bout full of growing pains.

Miller (16-0-1, 14 KOs) prevailed. Big Baby began to walk with a seventh-round stoppage of Dennis (12-3-1, 11 KOs).

"This was good, very good, for his development," promoter Dmitriy Salita said of his 274-pound Brooklyn fighter, who could afford to lose some of the baby fat yet still went beyond six rounds for the first time.

Good, too, for Miller's potential place in a division rocked by Tyson Fury's upset of Wladimir Klitschko. Anything is possible. To wit: Charles Martin is a beltholder; he's the new IBF champion

"I'd spank Charles Martin," said Miller.

SAMMY VASQUEZ TKO 6 ARON MARTINEZ

Jan. 23, Los Angeles (Fox)

The canvas-covered bit of scarred real estate between the ropes is often called a place of battle. Only warriors step inside those ropes. But one warrior goes there to escape. Sammy Vasquez has seen a real war.

"I made it through two tours, all in one piece," the Iraqi vet told media before he faced Aron Martinez. "A lot of guys weren't so lucky."

For Vasquez (21-0, 15 KOs), luck means another chance to answer an opening bell. The Pittsburgh welterweight says he's been diagnosed with post-traumatic-stress syndrome and boxing helps him deal with it.

The ring is his prescription. It has also become a career. That continued with a stoppage of Martinez (20-5-1, 4 KOs), who was coming off a decision over Devon Alexander in one of the biggest upsets in 2015. Martinez, 2-4 over his last six, quit after the sixth round because of an elbow injury.

NO. 8 DANNY GARCIA UD 12 ROBERT GUERRERO

Jan. 23, Los Angeles (Fox)

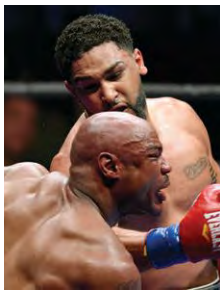
Add another intriguing possibility to the welterweight mix. Say hello to Danny Garcia.

That sounds strange. Garcia was a star at 140 pounds but there were questions about whether he could be a player at 147. He looked tentative at 142¼ in a majority decision over Lamont Peterson. He stopped Paulie Malignaggi at 146½ but couldn't shake doubts left by a controversial decision over Mauricio Herrera at junior welterweight.

But Garcia (32-0, 18 KOs) whipped the doubts and Robert Guerrero (33-4-1, 18 KOs) for a WBC belt and a spot in the 147-pound conversation alongside Keith Thurman and Kell Brook.

"I'm back where I belong," Garcia said after repeated rights pounded out a 116-112 decision on all the cards.

It wasn't clear who's next for the Philadelphia fighter. Thurman and Amir Khan were at ringside, though both had big fights coming up first.



DOMINIC BREAZEALE TKO 5 AMIR MANSOUR

Jan. 23, Los Angeles (Fox)

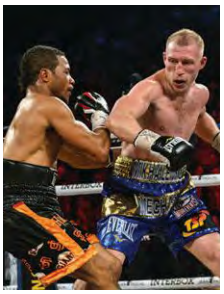
Dominic Breazeale, a former college quarterback trying to learn a few new signals in a different sport, discovered a couple of things about himself within five rounds of a tough test.

First, he can survive a heavyweight punch. Second, he can throw one.

Breazeale (17-0, 15 KOs) was floored in the third round, got up with poise and wits unshaken and delivered a crushing right hand in the fifth that left 43-year-old Amir Mansour (22-2-1, 16 KOs) with a bloodied mouth, a busted jaw and unable to answer the bell for the sixth.

"I guess that means I have punching power," Breazeale said almost as if he were surprised, or at least relieved to have the stuff that enabled him to win when he was trailing on the scorecards.

Whether there's enough of it for the 30-year-old to overcome his inexperience is another question.



NO. 10 DMITRY MIKHAYLENKO UD 10 KARIM MAYFIELD

Jan. 30, Montreal (HBO)

An introduction to the ranks of welterweight contenders probably didn't go the way Dmitry Mikhaylenko had planned. On the drama scale, his debut was a dud. But don't blame the promising Russian, who broke into the THE RING's 147-pound ratings at No. 10 before the bout.

Mikhaylenko (21-0, 9 KOs) was just the cliche's latest example of how styles dictate fights. Karim Mayfield (19-3-1, 11 KOs) was a lousy fit. Don't blame him, either. He took the fight on short notice because of an injury to Ray Robinson.

The result was predictable. Mayfield tried to score an upset with a bum-rush in the opening seconds. It didn't work. For the next nine rounds of Mikhaylenko's first HBO bout, the Russian relied on a jab and Mayfield relied on a clinch. On the three cards, Mikhaylenko won every round but one for a unanimous decision. Unanimously dull, too.

NO. 1 SERGEY KOVALEV TKO 7 NO. 4 JEAN PASCAL

Jan. 30, Montreal (HBO)

He quacks like a duck but Sergey Kovalev is one scary bird.

Kovalev (29-0-1, 26 KOs) is striking fear into just about anybody who offends him. Poor Jean Pascal. Pascal (30-4-1, 17 KOs) chose to insult Kovalev, calling him a racist. Kovalev's response was ruthless.

"I wanted to extend the rounds, punish him more," said Kovalev, whose jab and right forced Pascal trainer Freddie Roach to end the light heavyweight bout after seven rounds.

Kovalev celebrated by calling out Adonis Stevenson. "Chickenson" he called him while quacking for emphasis. Stevenson, the WBC champ, climbed through the ropes and into the show. But he looked like another duck, which is exactly what Kovalev thinks he's been doing.

Kovalev-Stevenson looks as unlikely as ever. But with Kovalev-Andre Ward possible for the end of the year, does anybody care?

NO. 4 KNOCKOUT CP FRESHMART UD 12 NO. 7 CARLOS BUITRAGO

Feb. 4, Chonburi, Thailand (Channel 7-Thailand)

There was no knockout for Knockout CP Freshmart. Not this time, anyway.

Freshmart (12-0, 6 KOs), who has one of the most entertaining names in any sport, had to settle for a 117-111, 119-109, 117-111 decision over the tough Carlos Buitrago (28-2-1, 16 KOs) in a 105-pound rematch.

Freshmart, also a kickboxer, scored a close decision over Buitrago in 2014. That one left questions. There were only answers in the sequel.

Freshmart neutralized Buitrago's counterpunching style. He also flashed an effective right counter of his own. Buitrago challenged him in the fifth with a solid left and body attack but Freshmart quickly responded with a versatile arsenal.

By the time it was over, there was no talk of a trilogy and only speculation about a showdown between Freshmart and South African Hekkie Budler, THE RING's No. 1-ranked strawweight.

COMING UP

PREDICTIONS ARE MADE BY RING STAFF MEMBERS MITCH ABRAMSON, DOUG FISCHER, BRIAN HARTY AND MICHAEL ROSENTHAL

MARCH

KEITH THURMAN VS. SHAWN PORTER

Date: March 12
Location: Mohegan Sun Casino, Uncasville, Conn.
Division: Welterweights
RING Ratings: Thurman No. 5, Porter No. 6
TV: CBS, Showtime
Watchability rating (up to five stars): ★★★★★
Also fighting: Edwin Rodriguez vs. Thomas Williams Jr., light heavyweights; Abner Mares vs. Fernando Montiel, featherweights.
Significance: This is an unusual matchup of top welterweights in their primes. Thurman (26-0, 22 KOs) is on the verge of becoming a major star after a series of dominating performances against good opposition. Porter (26-1-1, 16 KOs), a former titleholder, is coming off an impressive decision victory over Adrien Broner.
Prediction: Rosenthal – Thurman UD; Fischer – Thurman MD; Harty – Thurman TKO 11; Abramson – Thurman UD

ANDRE WARD VS. SULLIVAN BARRERA

Date: March 26
Location: Oracle Arena, Oakland, Calif.
Division: Light heavyweights
RING Ratings: None
TV: HBO
Watchability rating (up to five stars): ★★★
Significance: The inactive Ward (28-0, 15 KOs) is dipping his toe back into boxing against a second-tier opponent in Barrera (17-0, 12 KOs), who is coming off a fifth-round KO of Karo Murat. Ward, who has fought only three times in the past four years, is expected to fight 175-pound powerhouse Sergey Kovalev later this year.
Prediction: Rosenthal – Ward UD; Fischer – Ward UD; Harty – Ward UD; Abramson – Ward UD

MARCH 12 – Terry Flanagan (No. 5) vs. Derry Mathews, lightweights (for Flanagan's WBO title), Liverpool, England. Also, Guillermo Rigondeaux vs. James Dickens, junior featherweights.
MARCH 12 – David Lemieux (No. 4) vs. James De La Rosa, middleweights, Montreal
MARCH 12 – Juergen Braehmer (No. 5) vs. Eduard Gutknecht, light heavyweights, Neubrandenburg, Germany
MARCH 19 – Hekkie Budler (No. 1) vs. Byron Rojas, strawweights (for Budler's WBA title), Kempton Park, South Africa
MARCH 26 – Kell Brook (No. 1) vs. Kevin Bizier, welterweights (for Brook's IBF title), Sheffield, England (Sky)
MARCH 26 – Jose Pedraza (No. 7) vs. Stephen Smith, junior lightweights (for Pedraza's IBF title), New York City.
MARCH 28 – Satoshi Hosono (No. 9) vs. Rikiya Fukuhara, featherweights, Tokyo

APRIL

MANNY PACQUIAO VS. TIM BRADLEY

Date: April 9
Location: MGM Grand, Las Vegas
Division: Welterweights (for Bradley's WBO title)
RING Ratings: Pacquiao No. 2, Bradley No. 4
TV: HBO Pay-Per-View
Watchability rating (up to five stars): ★★★★
Also fighting: Arthur Abraham (No. 1) vs. Gilberto Ramirez (No. 4), super middleweights (for Abraham's WBO title); Oscar Valdez vs. Evgeny Gradovich (No. 8), featherweights.
Significance: Pacquiao (57-6-2, 38 KOs) is fighting for the last time (he says) in the rubber match of his three-fight series with Bradley (33-1-1, 13 KOs). Pacquiao is coming off a loss to Floyd Mayweather Jr. – and a shoulder injury, which evidently has healed. Most people believe Pacquiao won the first two meetings.
Prediction: Rosenthal – Pacquiao UD; Fischer – Bradley SD; Harty – Pacquio SD; Abramson – Pacquiao UD

Gennady Golovkin is scheduled to face Dominic Wade on April 23.

GENNADY GOLOVKIN VS. DOMINIC WADE

Date: April 23
Location: Forum, Inglewood, Calif.
Division: Middleweights (for Golovkin's IBF and WBA titles)
RING Ratings: Golovkin No 1
TV: HBO
Watchability rating (up to five stars): ★★★★
Significance: This amounts to a stay-busy fight for Golovkin (34-0, 31 KOs), who expects to face Canelo Alvarez in a megafight late this year. Triple-G has stopped 21 consecutive opponents. Wade (18-0, 12 KOs) is unbeaten but is taking an enormous step up in opposition. He is coming off a split-decision victory over Sam Soliman last June.
Prediction: Rosenthal – Golovkin KO 5; Fischer – Golovkin KO 6; Harty – Golovkin KO 5; Abramson – Golovkin KO 4

APRIL 2 – Hadillah Mohoumadi vs. Callum Smith (No. 9), super middleweights, Liverpool, England (Sky)
APRIL 8 – Grigory Drozd (No. 1) vs. Ilunga Makabu (No. 5), cruiserweights (for Drozd's WBC title), Moscow
APRIL 9 – Charles Martin vs. Anthony Joshua (No. 9), heavyweights (for Martin's IBF title), London
APRIL 23 – Nonito Donaire (No. 3) vs. Zsolt Bedak, junior featherweights (for Donaire's WBO title), Manila, Philippines.
APRIL 30 – Anselmo Moreno (No. 3) vs. Suriyan Sor Rungvisai (No. 8), bantamweights, Panama City, Panama.

MAY

MAY 7 – Canelo Alvarez (C) vs. Amir Khan, middleweights (for Alvarez's RING and WBC titles), Las Vegas (HBO Pay-Per-View)

MARK RALSTON

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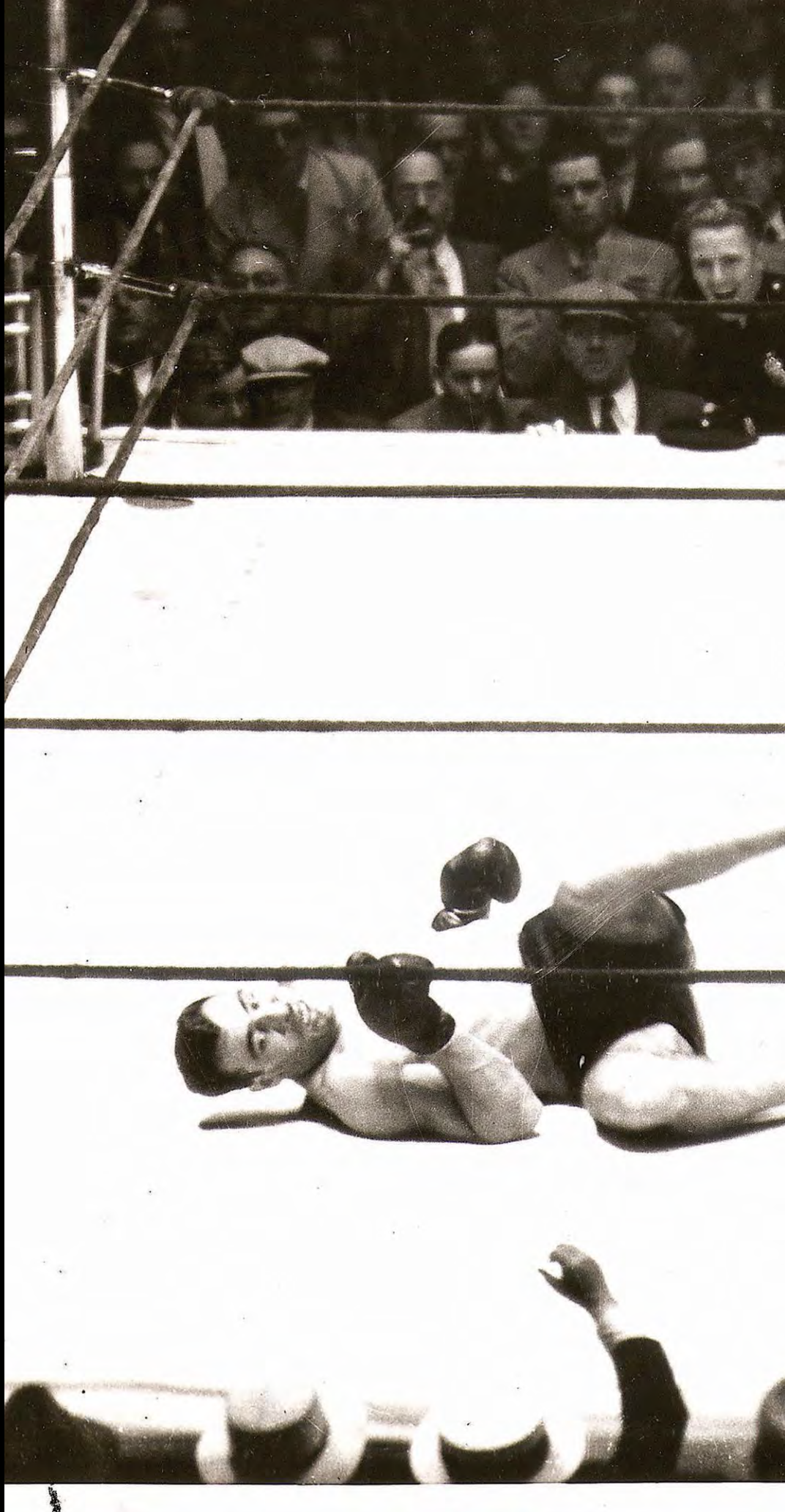
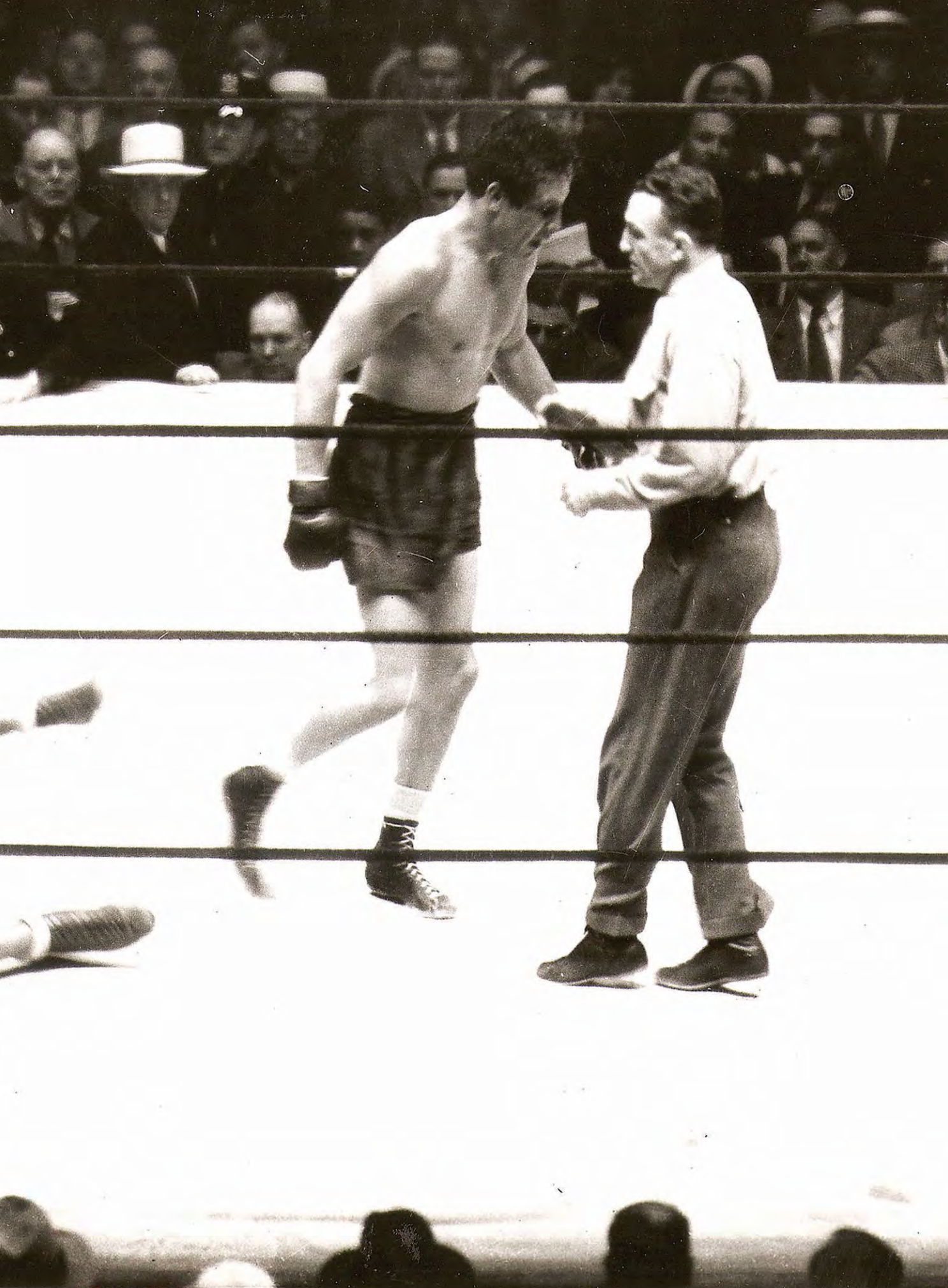
From The RING Archive

TIMBERRRRRRR

The hulking Primo Carnera – all 6 feet 5½ inches and 260-plus pounds of him – was on a run of 18 consecutive victories when he stepped into the ring to face Max Baer on June 14, 1934, at Madison Square Garden. Carnera had stopped Jack Sharkey the year before to win the heavyweight title and successfully defended against Paulino Uzcudun and Tommy Loughran. He also had delivered the blows that killed Ernie Schaaf 16 months before the Sharkey fight, leading some to suggest he should be outlawed. Here's the problem: Some historians believe that the awkward Italian with limited skills was controlled by the mob and had benefitted from fixed fights, possibly including the Sharkey fight. Baer, a tremendous talent with an aversion to proper training, obviously wasn't bought. The 6-foot-2½ Californian exposed Carnera's limitations, putting him down as many as 11 times (depending on the source) before stopping him in the 11th round to win the championship. Neither fighter did much afterward. Carnera won a few fights, was stopped again by Joe Louis in his last big fight and eventually went into wrestling. Baer lost his title to Jimmy Braddock in his next fight, which was depicted in the film "Cinderella Man." The jovial, charismatic Baer hung around for a while before becoming a competent bit player in the movies.





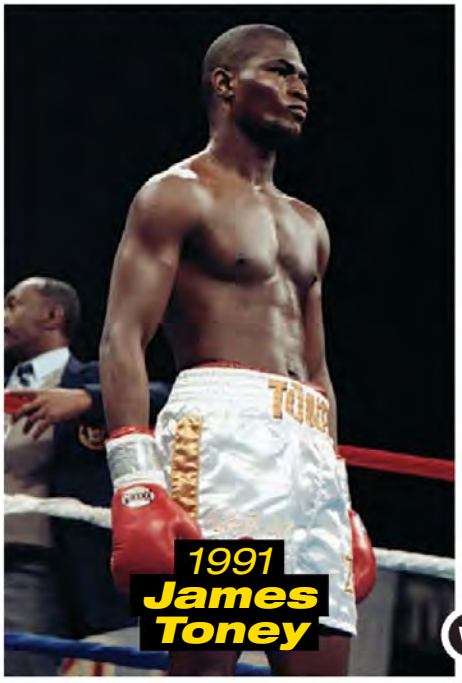
#ATTHEFIGHTS

By **Lamar Clark**

FOR BOXING AFICIONADOS ONLY

OLD SCHOOL vs. NEW SCHOOL

WHO WINS? ★ VOTE ON INSTAGRAM @RINGTV ★ #ATTHEFIGHTS



1991 James Toney

VS.

2016 Canelo Alvarez

TALE OF THE TAPE ★ MIDDLEWEIGHT

AUG. 24, 1968	**BORN**	JULY 18, 1990
GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.	**BIRTHPLACE**	TLAJOMULCO DE ZÚÑIGA, JALISCO, MEXICO
"LIGHTS OUT"	**ALIAS**	"CANELO"
ORTHODOX	**STANCE**	ORTHODOX
76-10-3 (46 KOs)	**RECORD**	46-1-1 (32 KOs)
51 PERCENT	**KO PERCENTAGE**	67 PERCENT
72 INCHES	**REACH**	70½ INCHES

STYLES MAKE FIGHTS

Former NBA player Shaquille O'Neal (top, on the left) and heavyweight titleholder Deontay Wilder attended the Fanatics Super Bowl Party in San Francisco. UFC bantamweight champion Holly Holm (above) attended the Fighters Only World Mixed Martial Arts Awards in Las Vegas.

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